













IN THE DAYS OF

Milton

3914

By

TUDOR JENKS, 1857-1922

AUTHOR OF "IN THE DAYS OF CHAUCER" AND  
"IN THE DAYS OF SHAKESPEARE"

ILLUSTRATED



New York  
A. S. BARNES & COMPANY  
MDCCCCVII

COPYRIGHT, 1905, BY

A. S. BARNES & COMPANY

Published August, 1905

Second Printing November, 1906



3584  
J4  
1907

## PREFACE

THE England of John Milton is the England from which America drew its life. The Puritans, the Cavaliers, the Independents were the men who came across the Atlantic to begin life in our new land, and with them they brought the principles, the sentiments, the traditions, and the prejudices that entered into the forming of the nation they founded.

To know our own history we must know the England that made these men what they were, the England of the days of the poet Milton.

The genial humanity of Chaucer and Shakespeare warms admiration to affection, but the virtues of Milton by their extreme rectitude tend to repel sympathy. Amid the fierce controversies of his times, there was

## *Preface*

little to cultivate the softer qualities, but the story of Milton's life shows him an affectionate friend and one capable of love.

His life was such that he might have become embittered. His dearest friend was soon lost; his marriages were certainly disappointing; his family were never in accord with his opinions, and he won during his lifetime little worldly success. Yet his poems tell of a serene and contented mind, and those who know him best find him free from every pettiness of his time—a disciple and apostle of liberty.

Although he was apparently unheard by those around him, his words are still winning victories for mankind wherever there is tyranny to be overthrown, bigotry to be rebuked, or truth yet striving for a hearing.

In this book his life is traced upon the background of events then filling the minds of Englishmen. The greater happenings are noted as briefly as they might be borne in mind by one who, after a long life, recalls the more striking facts remaining in his

## *Preface*

memory. It is hoped that this story of Milton's personality and times will prove of use to general readers and will supplement the purely critical study of Milton's works.

A brief bibliography and a chronological table are added to direct the reader to fuller information.

TUDOR JENKS.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. <i>The Puritan and the Cavalier</i> . . . . .	I
II. <i>The England of Milton's Youth</i> . . . . .	16
III. <i>Milton's Family and His Boyhood</i> . . . . .	31
IV. <i>The School Days in London</i> . . . . .	45
V. <i>Milton at Cambridge University</i> . . . . .	60
VI. <i>Milton's Residence at Horton</i> . . . . .	82
VII. <i>The Visit to the Continent</i> . . . . .	98
VIII. <i>End of His Foreign Journey</i> . . . . .	117
IX. <i>The Writer of Political and Religious Pamphlets</i> . . . . .	135
X. <i>In the Early Years of the War</i> . . . . .	152
XI. <i>Milton's Days of Teaching</i> . . . . .	171
XII. <i>To the End of the Civil War</i> . . . . .	189
XIII. <i>Last Days of Royalty</i> . . . . .	210
XIV. <i>Milton as the Commonwealth's De- fender</i> . . . . .	227

## Table of Contents

	Page
<i>XV. From Cromwell's Dominion to the Restoration . . . . .</i>	241
<i>XVI. The Restoration and Milton's Last Years . . . . .</i>	260
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
<i>Chief Dates Relating to Milton's Life and works . . . . .</i>	285
<i>A Brief Bibliography . . . . .</i>	293
<i>Index . . . . .</i>	297

## CHAPTER I

### THE PURITAN AND THE CAVALIER.

WHEN our American forefathers began a new nation the ideas they carried with them across the Atlantic were those of Milton's England; and we shall gain the clearest understanding of their hopes and purposes by learning what the Englishmen of the early seventeenth century were in their own home.

There were in the realms of the Stuart kings, James I and Charles I, two great parties with widely differing views upon questions of politics, religion, and social life. In later days than those of Milton's youth these parties became known as Royalists and Puritans, King's men and Parliament men, Cavaliers and Roundheads, Ma-

## *In the Days of Milton*

lignants and Rebels, and so on; but "Cavaliers" and "Puritans" seem to be the best terms by which to distinguish them for our own purposes.

There was for many years no sharp line of division, but as the conflict between king and people became more acute, men were forced to range themselves with one side or the other, until all England was divided between the two great parties.

With the Puritan party were all who believed in independence in church government; who wished to limit strictly the power of the throne; who thought men's daily lives should be guided by the rules laid down in the Scriptures. With the Cavaliers were found the upholders of a state-governed church, those who favored aristocratic government, who were less strict in their way of living, or at least more tolerant of their neighbor's faults.

We may roughly divide men into similar classes to-day; but in Milton's time came a parting of the ways, and a struggle to see

## *Puritan and Cavalier.*

which principles should control England. The Puritans and the Cavaliers had little sympathy for one another, and differed in opinions no more widely than in their lives.

While there were households in which wealth and refinement were accompanied by the strictest morality in conduct and the most extreme Puritanism in religious views, there were also Cavaliers no less moral and abstemious, no less conscientious, and quite as poor as any Puritans; but in general terms we may picture the differing lives of the two parties.

The Puritan life of the time was in wide contrast to that of the Cavaliers. The beginnings of Puritanism were among the humbler classes, whose freedom from the vices of the rich was somewhat due to the absence of the same temptations. The Cavalier was fond of good food and of wine, and often drank to excess. He was used to a gay and idle social life, and this gave opportunity for immorality. His reading was of the literature meant to ap-

## *In the Days of Milton.*

peal to tastes not over nice, and his habits were formed by these influences.

The Puritan household was less lavish, and more conducive to temperance in eating, drinking and dress. The extravagant habits of the Cavalier by very contrast led the Puritans to the other extreme. Instead of dazzling colors, they chose the sober hues. In place of the love-locks curling upon the shoulders and lace collar, the Puritans wore modest linen collars or small ruffs, and clipped their hair more nearly to the length now so universal among men. Jewelry was avoided, their speech was formed upon Scriptural models, and their whole carriage was in accordance with their ideas of seemly simplicity.

The literature popular among the fashionable classes was despised by the Puritans not only as demoralizing but as a frivolous waste of time. Their reading was more given to theological discourses and treatises, and their talk was much upon the same endless subjects.

## *Puritan and Cavalier*

The dissatisfaction of Puritans with the church was based not alone upon their objection to its ceremonies and symbols, in which they saw relics of popery or danger of a return to that form of government, but upon the character of the English clergy, many of whom led what seemed to these sober-minded citizens ungodly and worldly lives.

Thus in many ways the influence of the Puritans was for good and toward greatly needed reforms. They frowned upon hard drinking, and were abstemious in their habits. They were respecters of womanhood, and discountenanced every form of immoral life. They saw in the festivals of the country folk opportunities for wrongdoing, and urged that Sunday should be a day set apart for something better than roistering and rough play. In all these matters their views seem to us warranted by the state of affairs in the England of the time.

But at first the Puritan movement was

## *In the Days of Milton.*

merely an ill-defined desire for the reform of abuses.

We shall find a fair type of the Cavalier household at the time of King James' accession in one of the old manor-houses such as were built in the later days of Elizabeth. The house, often in the shape of the letter E, perhaps in compliment to the Virgin Queen, is built high upon turfed terraces rising from such a formal garden as Bacon describes in his essay upon "Gardens." There are clipped trees in fantastic shapes, trimly kept hedges, and ample flower-beds. The house has a central court, an impressive entrance hall, wide windows, two great wings, and long galleries well lighted.

Within, the main hall was lofty, with vaulted and timbered roof. The hospitable fireplace was surmounted by a decorated chimney-piece. There were richly carved furniture, the walls were hung with tapestry, and throughout the dwelling were signs of wealth and good living, for it was a time of prosperity. Paintings and statues, Vene-

## *Puritan and Cavalier*

tian glass-work, rich plate and curiously wrought table-furniture were among the household treasures. There were extensive stables where good horses were kept in readiness, and more carefully lodged than the laborers on the estate; and near there were kennels for the hounds and other dogs, and even mews for the hawks, that were not yet entirely neglected.

The members of the wealthy Cavalier's household dressed richly, in silks, velvets and laces, much in the fashion known to us by the portraits of Raleigh, Essex, Leicester and other great men of the Elizabethan period, though there were a few changes in the shapes of ruffs or collars, of doublets and hose. Besides the old knight who was the head of the establishment, and the lady his wife, were the children and young relatives, whose dress differed little from that of their elders; and the household also included often a threadbare or prosperous chaplain, who read the church services for the household, and was usually a complai-

## *In the Days of Milton*

sant dependant upon the family, inclined to wink at the faults of his betters and to save his severity for humbler ears.

There was much gaiety at times, when in celebration of holidays or family events the great hall was ablaze with candelabra, and bustling with the brilliantly dressed guests, who came on horse-back or in coaches from miles around. There were hunting-parties or excursions for fishing, and expeditions to neighboring towns or to London, to attend balls or assemblies given by people of their own rank.

For the country people about the manor-house, there were fairs, May-day gatherings, religious festivals, or the riotous celebration of holidays, and Christmas merry-makings; and there were also long days of toil during busy seasons, ending with the harvest home celebrations. But in general the surface appearances of life warranted the universal feeling that "Merry England" was a just description of the land. Only to one who looked more closely were

## *Puritan and Cavalier*

there signs that the merriment was not always widespread.

In the cities the difference between the lives of Puritans and Cavaliers were not, of course, so marked. A greater soberness of dress and strictness of demeanor may have characterized the former, but in the life of such a man as the father of John Milton there was in outward matters little to distinguish him from his more orthodox neighbors. The family life was much the same in all London households except those of the nobility or the very poor, and the Puritans were to be distinguished only by their attitude toward matters of churchmanship. In fact, when it came to the religious or intellectual life, the England of those days was one thing to the Royalist or Cavalier, another to the Parliamentarian or Roundhead, and it was nearly impossible for either to understand or sympathize with the other.

The Cavalier's highest reverence was for the king, the church, and "Merry England." He did not blind himself to the

## *In the Days of Milton*

faults of the Stuart kings, but his belief in monarchy was unshaken by the unworthiness of the monarch of any one period. The throne meant to him the glory of the kingdom of England, it stood for the whole long roll of victories that made holy his country's royal standard; it stood for the supremacy of law and order and was the shrine of patriotism. It was the bulwark and rallying point under threat of foreign invasion.

In the mind of the Cavaliers the church also stood for the whole body of national religion. It was the church of his forefathers, hallowed by his earliest memories and entwined with every great event of his life—with birth, baptism, confirmation, holy communion, marriage, death. All these associations made sacred the very stones of the cathedrals and churches, the instruments of worship, and the rich adornments piety had contributed to beautify “Mother Church.” That there were unworthy men among the prelates and on the

episcopal thrones, that there were abuses and errors in the establishment was to be regretted, as one might regret a deformity in a parent or child, but with no loss of reverence or love.

The same disposition that tolerated or excused the faults of king or church, would overlook the regrettable excesses and irregularities that existed amid the institutions making up the traditional life of the people of England. The old customs—the Morris dances, the May-pole revelries, the liberties of fair days and market days—were, like all human ways, far from an ideal perfection. Men are not angels, all of us know, and there is always some bitter mingled with the sweet. But the old customs were hallowed by time, they were picturesque, they made life romantic, bright, and interesting. Since England was no worse than the rest of the world, why interfere?

So might the Cavalier express himself, with an air of kindly tolerance that is most engaging.

## *In the Days of Milton.*

But the Puritan, the Roundhead, must be heard, and at once we listen to another story.

Instead of the sacred Majesty reverenced by the Cavalier, we see a weak, corrupt, opinionated man, oppressing his subjects that he may waste their substance among a despicable rout of dissolute courtiers, revelers without principle and without heart. Their careless lives are maintained only by the wretchedness of overworked men and women. The holy heritage of the national honor is pawned for foreign gold, or to gain the favor of royalties as corrupt as the Stuarts themselves. The rights of the people are made to give way to the empty caprices of the king and his unworthy favorites, and the laws of morality and of the kingdom are made powerless to punish even the crimes of wicked lords and ladies.

To the Puritan the church had drifted away from her ancient moorings, and the truth was no longer in her keeping. Forms and ceremonies were empty of the spirit,

and served but to gag and repress the inspired men longing to deliver a message from on high. If any remnant of the ancient faith lingered there it was a dead faith and lacking the works that give life and meaning and power. The bishops and clergy were the creatures of a corrupted aristocracy, living apart from the religious life of their people, of the flocks looking to these shepherds for their spiritual food. Worship of divine things had been transferred to mere symbols, and had become idolatry, hateful in the sight of God and of religious souls.

As for the corruptions in the national life, these were but the fruits of the worldly life, the results of man's alienation from heavenly things; and as such they were become an abomination. Costly dress, extravagance in living, idleness and empty folly, games, dancing, cards, dice—they all were the "devil's snares" wherein to catch the soul, and to every right-minded Christian abhorrent.

## *In the Days of Milton*

With each of these men we must have sympathy, with neither need we fully agree. In all great controversies time shows something of right on both sides, and we may delight both in the dashing Cavalier, gay, brave, tolerant, rejoicing in his loyalty to throne and to church, and also we may respect, admire and sympathize with the Puritan's manly fight for the right, with his honesty and his desire to put down shams.

There were noble figures on both sides of the conflict, men that were an honor to England and to the cause they championed; and yet the complete ascendancy of either party brought great evils. Against the fanaticism and narrowness of the Commonwealth must be weighed the corruption of the Restoration; and among Cavaliers and Puritans alike were found honor, loyalty, courage, moral and physical. In the ranks of both armies there was no lack of hypocrites, knaves, and traitors, none of heroes and martyrs.

## *Puritan and Cavalier.*

The great pendulum of national tendencies covered during the life of Milton a wide arc, and since his time the same motion has been repeated. The impulse that urges it upon its course is the love of liberty, and this love of liberty was the main motive of John Milton throughout his whole career.

The repression of religious freedom led to the revolt of the English church and the English nation against the Pope of Rome and the Catholic powers during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth. Then came the attempt to restrain the freedom of spirit thus created, an attempt beginning under Elizabeth and lasting through the reign of the first Stuart. The second Stuart fell a victim to the reaction of the English people, and the third was restored when this impulse spent its force.

But the youth of Milton belonged to the reign of James I, and the conditions under which this king came to the throne must be first considered.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ENGLAND OF MILTON'S YOUTH

THE reign of Queen Elizabeth saw England grow to a commanding place among the nations. Spain had been crippled by the loss of her great fleet, and had been held at bay. Englishmen had faith in themselves and in their country, and this faith made them loyal to the Queen and to the throne. The great men of the land were men whose exploits gained them respect, and their extravagancies of dress and their affectations were excused because they were known to be men of strength and ability. Elizabeth was admired and praised even after she had lost her charm of manner; and she was too wise to oppose the popular will in minor matters. She was Queen of all the English.

## *England of Milton's Youth*

When James VI of Scotland succeeded her, he had only to copy her wise example to retain the personal respect she had gained for the occupant of the throne. But James came of a different stock. The son of Lord Darnley and of Mary Queen of Scots was not likely to resemble in character the daughter of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII. His ideas were Scotch, his education French and classical. He was lacking in English common sense.

Personally, he is said to have been good-natured and sensible—the “wisest fool in Christendom,” as he was called. From the first he made himself disliked for trifling reasons; thus in Shakespeare's play, “Measure for Measure,” there are two passages supposed to refer to James' dislike of being crowded by the subjects who thronged about him as he came from Edinburgh to London in 1603. If Elizabeth was proud and impatient, she was careful to discourage no expression of loyalty. James was afraid of the people, fearful of assassina-

## *In the Days of Milton*

tion. He was not cordial to his new English subjects, and he was likewise repellent toward the Scottish nobles who hoped for a reward of past loyalty. Elizabeth regarded herself as the leader of her people, and made their interests hers; James felt that England was his rightful estate, bound to administer to his glory, and especially to fill the royal purse. After the poverty of the Scotch throne, he looked upon the comparative wealth of the English treasury as inexhaustible.

He became extravagant, and was driven to every shift to raise money for himself and for his hangers-on; and his attempts to increase the royal revenues brought him into conflict with his parliaments and his people.

Yet the general state of the kingdom was such that, rightly managed, there might have been revenue enough even for an extravagant court, if only the good will of the people had been gained, and their prejudices respected. The land was prosperous,

and the people were finding many new pursuits that brought wealth into their hands. The farmers were regaining their rightful importance, and land that had been made into sheep-runs was once more ploughed and sown. Many new trades had been brought into England by Protestants driven by persecution out of Europe. The exploits of English sailors had increased commerce with foreign lands, and had brought wealth into the country not only from lawful trading but from the piratic seizure of Spanish and French merchantmen—a species of private warfare then winked at by the government.

The distribution of this wealth was not quite even. The wages of laborers had not risen as fast as prices; that is, money wages were nearly the same, and would buy not quite so much. Rents had risen, and the owners of land—the nobles and the gentry, or land-owning families—had larger incomes; this had come about because the land was worth more to the farm-

ers, since it would produce more crops that were salable. For it must be remembered that the use of vegetables as food had been greatly increased during the reign of Elizabeth. At the same time wool had not kept up its high price, and there was not the same temptation to dismiss agricultural laborers and keep great flocks of sheep needing only the care of one or two shepherds and their dogs.

This fall in the price of wool was due to a curious cause. In Elizabeth's reign there had been so many good fields turned to pastures that the sheep waxed fat, heavy and lazy. They made better mutton, but coarser wool. The English wool had been the best in the world, but it was now no better than others, and the demand lessened.

The sheep lands going back to the farmers, caused them to hire more laborers, and there were work and wages for the country folk. Another cause for the increasing prosperity was the more skillful farming, and growing knowledge of the value of fer-

tilizing the land. There were books printed to tell how crops should be treated and farm animals managed. These works were well written, and so valued that it was recommended they should be taught in the schools; such a book is Tusser's "Five Hundred Points of Husbandry," published two years before Shakespeare's birth, in 1562, and republished in 1604, not long before Milton's birth. It was in rhyme, and contains lines that were or have become proverbs, such as "Better late than never," and "Who goeth a-borrowing, goeth a-sorrowing." Farming was becoming a science, and the value of land rose with the increased returns that farmers could reckon upon.

As a result of greater prosperity, people throughout the country lived better in every respect. Where their fathers had slept in straw, the cotters now had bedsteads, and yet these laborers had less than their share of the growing wealth. The classes that profited in greater proportion began, after

## *In the Days of Milton*

the manner of mankind, “to ape their betters.”

The gentry imitated the fashions of the nobility and the rich merchants. Their clothing was richer and more fanciful. Their tables were lavish, and their houses well furnished. In place of wooden trenchers, pewter plates were becoming common among the well-to-do, and silver services were not now confined to the households of the few great nobles. There were woven tapestries upon the walls, replacing the “painted cloths” that had been common from the days of Chaucer to those of Shakespeare.

More fuel could be afforded, and so there were more fires, and as a consequence a great building of chimneys.

With more money and greater leisure, there came a disposition to gather in the cities for the sake of society. Writers of the time mention the shutting up of country houses while families sought the gaieties of city life.

## *England of Milton's Youth*

Abundance of money also had two other effects. It gave a strong impulse to the schemes for colonizing foreign lands, since these were believed to offer chances for great profit, through gold discoveries, fisheries, and the importation of woods or drugs. Banking, in the same way, was stimulated because there were many who had money to invest. And this period sees in England the true beginnings of money-lending.

America and the Indies were the chief fields for planting colonies and trading-posts. The Virginia Company and the East India Company are examples of the enterprise of English merchants and adventurers. The fisheries sent English sailors to Newfoundland or to Iceland, while the slave trade took their vessels to Africa and to the American plantations of the Spanish.

As all these opportunities for trade and commerce were improved the English government tried to regulate them by law. The importing or exporting of goods was

## *In the Days of Milton.*

forbidden as seemed good to the ruling powers. The exclusive right to make or sell certain articles was granted to individuals who would undertake to transact their business for the interests of the state.

But these monopolies proved to be a tempting source of revenue to the crown or to its favored courtiers. The grants were extended from unusual commodities to those of the commonest use, to absolute necessities; and thus the crown, which had at first exercised the power of monopoly on the basis of the public good, came to regard the grants as a means of raising revenue—in short, as a means of forced taxation.

Toward the end of Elizabeth's reign, the people through the Parliament had complained of these monopolies as a grievous wrong, and she had promised to examine into the subject. Two years before the accession of James the Parliament again complained that nothing had yet been done to right the wrong. The crown ministers tried to retain the sovereign's right to mo-

## *England of Milton's Youth.*

nopolies, and asked Parliament to petition the queen to redress the illegalities. Of course this petition would have been an admission that the Queen could do as she pleased, and the parliament were not to be fooled into this recognition of monopolies.

Elizabeth, being wise, yielded, and declared that the existing monopolies should be repealed and no new ones granted,—a promise which was not entirely kept, as we shall see; and many of the monopolies were left as a bone of contention for King James and his people.

Another element tending to make the last years of Elizabeth's reign a time of prosperity was the existence of peace at home and of wars abroad. The energy of the English had gone into the improvement of their own country. They had in individual cases gone abroad and seen enough of fighting, as in the Netherlands where Sir Philip Sidney fell and where John Smith and Miles Standish began their military lives; upon the sea they had ample practice

## *In the Days of Milton*

in all forms of warfare. But England was undisturbed and could give attention to the farm and to the trades. Her citizens were engaged in their own businesses and in the administration of their home government and affairs.

The men who went to Parliament were men of substance and experience in practical matters. They had, as the historian Gardiner says, "been used to deal with their own local affairs before being called on to discuss the affairs of the country."

Such men as Hampden and Cromwell, as Pym and Vane, came from families of substance and standing in their own communities, used to judge for themselves and to act with decision. The opposition to Spain and Roman Catholicism in Europe had made the loyal English favor the Protestant cause, and thus the members of Parliament came to be strong adherents of Protestantism.

King James during his reign in Scotland had been in bitter conflict with the Catho-

## *England of Milton's Youth*

lics and the Presbyterians, and had shown that he would be likely to favor the principal opponents of these parties—the Episcopacy. And yet there were reasons why all parties looked upon the new king as likely to favor each of them. The Roman Catholics knew that the Pope looked with satisfaction on his accession to the English throne, and expected him to be lenient in enforcing the severe laws Elizabeth had made against the Catholics who refused to conform to the English church, and to recognize her right to reign.

The Presbyterians hoped that the king of Presbyterian Scotland might be on better terms with them than with the Scotch of the same belief; and the Puritans hoped that to win favor with their strong party in England James might listen to their propositions for the reform of what they considered abuses.

All were disappointed. James, at the celebrated conference held in Hampton Court Palace, rebuked the Puritans and

## *In the Days of Milton*

threw his influence completely on the side of the bishops who wished to uphold the usages of the English church. He even went so far as to threaten to "harry the Puritans out of the kingdom."

Thus the king had made enemies of another large and influential part of the English people, and had declared that the principles for which they stood were considered by him as tending to undermine the royal rights.

As for the Roman Catholics, James tried to carry out his promise to the Pope. The fines meant to stamp out Catholicism were remitted; and then, when the Catholics ceased to attend the English church services, James banished the priests from London.

This brought about the so-called "Gunpowder Plot," and the renewed persecution of all Catholics, whereby the King earned still further enmity.

But the greatest cause of strife between king and people arose in connection with

the attempt to raise money. If this money had been needed for the defense of the nation it might have been granted, even though the methods of raising it had been unpopular or unlawful. King James, however, made no pretense of applying to any good purpose the money unrightfully exacted. He lavished it upon Scotch favorites, and in foolish expenditures, treating the kingdom as a private estate bound to supply him with a revenue he might dispose of as he chose.

Parliaments were summoned and urged to meet the king's demands, and when they seized the opportunity to make terms binding the king against further wrongful taxes, they were sent home again with a scolding, and the king went without his money, and was driven to other projects to secure funds.

Among these perhaps the most unpopular was the attempt to marry his son into the Spanish royal family, and the negotiations to bring this about lasted for nine

## *In the Days of Milton*

years, only to be abandoned as hopeless when the Spanish had thoroughly snubbed the English prince.

Such were the main events that occupied the minds of the English for the few years before and after Milton's birth, and it will be seen how all were in some measure concerned in forming his character and shaping the events of his life.

Milton was in this respect like neither Chaucer nor Shakespeare. Chaucer lived a life apart from the public events of his time, and seems little affected by them in his writings; while Shakespeare, though he made use of such material as seemed to him adapted to interest his audiences, has left nothing to show that he exerted the slightest influence in favor of any movement of his times.

But John Milton's life cannot be told without continual reference to public events, and for long years he gave himself heart and soul to the advocacy of those public reforms in which he believed.

## CHAPTER III

### MILTON'S FAMILY AND HIS BOYHOOD

THE family from which the poet Milton descended has been traced no further back than a certain Henry Milton living in Oxfordshire, a man of small means, probably a farmer tenant upon an estate he rented. Of him we know only that he died late in 1558, not long before Elizabeth came to the throne, leaving property to the value of £7, certainly not a large amount even considering that money in those days would buy so much more than this amount would mean perhaps \$200 to-day. He was what is called a yeoman farmer.

The son of this Henry Milton was the poet's grandfather. His name was Richard, and he is said to have been an under-

## *In the Days of Milton*

ranger, or one of the keepers, of Shotover Forest. Oxfordshire was then thickly wooded, and this forest was not far from the village of Holton, where these ancestors lived, a little place five miles eastward of Oxford. Richard's house was at Stanton St. John, a hamlet near Holton, and in the same neighborhood he found his wife, whose maiden name had been Haughton, but who was a widow when Richard married her.

There are reasons for believing that Richard was richer than his father, for the son of Richard was better educated than was then usual for men in his station. This son, also named John Milton, was the poet's father, and was born in 1562 or 1563. He may have been a student at Oxford, for he seems to have known something of Latin. He was a contemporary of Shakespeare, being possibly a year older, and came of about the same class of people, and lived within thirty miles or so of Stratford-on-Avon.

Richard Milton and his son John differed in their religious opinions, we are told, and when the son "was found to be reading the Bible in his own room," he was sent from home to make his way in the world without his father's help. He is next heard of in London, giving lessons in music, and earning some money besides as performer and composer. Then his name is found first as an apprentice and afterward as a full member of the "Scriveners' Company," to which he was admitted when still a few years under forty, in 1599.

This was one of the many companies or unions of the London tradesmen and craftsmen, associations that looked after the welfare of their members, made rules about the apprenticeship to be served before one practised as a master workman, and generally regulated the business of its members. These guilds were powerful and respected, many of them very old and prosperous, owning buildings for their meetings, and

## *In the Days of Milton*

looking after the families of members who died.

The Scriveners were something like attorneys. They drew up legal papers, wrote them out carefully in due form, saw to the making of contracts, and very naturally became valued advisers of men with money to lend or to invest. Besides this, they learned how to invest money of their own, and thus now and then became men of property. Such a business successfully carried on proves its practiser to be a man of some cultivation and ability.

Besides being a prosperous scrivener, the elder John Milton gave enough of his time to his music to become a composer and musician of some note, and had more than the usual education. He was fairly prosperous, and among other property in London owned the house where the poet was born.

Soon after entering the Scriveners' Company, the father had married Sarah Jeffrey, in the Church of All Hallows—or All Saints—in Bread street, London. In the

## *Family and Boyhood*

same street as All Saints Church was the shop and home of John Milton, Scrivener, where he had an office fitted not unlike a modern lawyer's office, with desks for a master and his apprentices, stools and chairs, good ink and quill pens lying about ready for business, for much of the copying or drafting of manuscripts was done in the office and then delivered to customers—as type-writing is done to-day. One of Milton's biographers calls attention to two quotations wherein scriveners are mentioned. One is Chaucer's little poem to his "Scrivener Adam," the other is in Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew,"

"We'll pass the marriage privately and well.  
Send for your daughter by the servant here;  
My boy shall fetch the scrivener presently."

That is, will bring the professional writer to draw up the marriage contract at once, for "presently" means "at once" in Shakespeare. As to musical ability, Dr. Burney's "History of Music" speaks of the

## *In the Days of Milton.*

elder Milton as “a voluminous composer, and equal in science, if not in genius, to the best musicians of his age.”

The mother has not left even so much renown to posterity. There was long a doubt as to her maiden name, but the best opinion now is that she was one of two orphan daughters of a merchant tailor of London named Paul Jeffrey, originally from Essex, her own name being Sarah. John married her about 1600, when she was about twenty-eight years old. Her son in his poems speaks of her as of good descent, and known for her charitable disposition. Another fact which would be trivial except for her son’s loss of his sight, is the weakness of her eyes, compelling her to wear spectacles while still less than thirty years of age. Milton’s father had unusually good eyesight, being able to read without glasses up to eighty-four.

There were six children, of whom three died young, leaving Anne, John, and Christopher, who ranked in age as here named.

The house in Bread street was, after the fashion of the time, distinguished by a sign, since as a business office it was an advantage to have it known to the public, and numbers for houses were a later invention. Thus in old books you will see the printer's or publisher's place of business thus distinguished: "Printed by Ralph Blower for Thomas Pavier, & are to be solde at his shop in Corn-hill, at the signe of the Cat and Parrats, over against Popeshead alley nere the Royal Exchange." The above is taken from a book published in 1590. Sidney's "Apologie for Poetrie" is to be sold at Henry Olney's shop "in Paules Churchyard, at the signe of the George, neere to Cheap-gate."

John Milton's address was "at the sign of the Spread Eagle in Bread street," the eagle being adopted from the armorial bearings of the family. Here in a narrow street the future poet lived in the midst of London from the date of his birth, December 9, 1608, until he was eleven years old.

## *In the Days of Milton*

Bread street opened upon Cheapside, the old London market place, and in Milton's day a busy thoroughfare. Over the very ground of Bread street crossed old Watling street, the famous Roman road and one of the most ancient highways of London, so the boy was born in the very heart of his native city. The streets in that neighborhood bear witness that they once were favored by the sellers of certain wares, for near Bread comes Milk street, Honey lane, Wood street, Friday street (favored of fish dealers), Cutter street, and so on, showing that here near the market place were gathered the butchers, the bakers and candle-stick makers, dwelling in the upper stories and selling their goods in the open booths below, as was the fashion of the time.

The streets were not yet generally paved, and were very poorly lighted at night by dim lanterns hung at corners or before the doors of the citizens. The houses were built gable-end to the road, showing the peaked roofs, and projected well toward

## *Family and Boyhood.*

one another, serving as a shelter if one kept close to the walls in rainy weather. There were good inns in and near Bread street, and many well-built houses ornamented with carved figures on their great beams, and often made exceedingly gay with colors and gilding. A large model of such a house front is in the Metropolitan museum, New York. London of that day was a small place comparatively, and not yet beyond the reach of the country air. Garnett in his life of Milton says, "Even now the fragrance of the hay may be inhaled in Bread street on a balmy summer's night; then the meadows were near the doors, and the undefiled sky was reflected by an unpolluted stream," for there was little smoke, and good fish could still be caught in the Thames.

In Mead's "Milton's England," the author describes very fully the sights that were familiar to the small boy of the Milton household, mentioning especially the "Standard in Cheap," a statue showing a

## *In the Days of Milton*

man blowing a horn; and one of the crosses erected in memory of Queen Eleanor, as noticeable objects in Cheapside. Milton was baptized in All Hallows church, where his father and mother had been married, and the building remained in Bread street until 1878. It was probably the place of worship for the scrivener and his family.

His father being a Puritan, the household was no doubt a quiet and decorous home. There were lessons on the organ for the boy, and perhaps also on the bass-viol, which the poet played in later years. He began his studies early, and was carefully watched by his father so that he should not be overworked, for as we know from his earliest picture the boy was slight and looked delicate.

This portrait was painted in 1618, when John was ten years old, by Cornelius Jansen, a Dutch painter recently from Amsterdam. It cost about a hundred dollars (in our money), not a high price considering that Jansen was employed by noblemen and

## *Family and Boyhood*

even by King James himself. The portrait shows a sober-faced little fellow, with close-cut auburn hair, wearing a broad lace frill, or collar. Beneath the picture when it was engraved appeared these lines:

“When I was yet a child, no childish play  
To me seemed pleasing; all my mind was set  
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do  
What might be public good; myself I thought  
Born to that end—born to promote all truth  
And righteous things.”

How absurd these lines would be if they were not true! And it was a time in the history of England when there was the greatest need for such a man. Under Elizabeth, in spite of plots now and then, and religious dissension natural after Henry VIII had declared independence of the papal system, the country was united against European powers, as she had shown when her fleet had defeated the Great Armada under the command of an English Roman Catholic, Lord Howard.

As England was loyal to the queen, so

## *In the Days of Milton*

was she to her people, being ever careful to consider their interests, and quick to repress the noblemen who presumed on her favor. She had chosen wise advisers, and followed their counsels.

When King James came to the throne a different period began, and in the struggles arising between him and his people John Milton bore no small part. It was a time of division into parties and sects, of fierce controversy by word and pen, of disunion and at last of open war. Under Elizabeth the state was like a healthy man, able to overcome minor disorders by general vitality; under James, it was like an invalid in whose frame disease is engaged in a mortal struggle with the forces of health, where the result seems long in doubt.

From beginning to end the life of Milton was affected by the state of England, and his actions and his writings were due to influences only to be understood by knowing the history of his times. Thus we have already seen that it was a religious differ-

ence that made his father a resident of London, and caused John Milton to be born and reared in the city instead of in a quiet country town.

We shall not need to follow minutely the political events, but must remind ourselves of some greater occurrences of the time. James came to the throne five years before Milton was born, and during these five years had managed to lose the sympathy of the English people. He had been wasteful of the public moneys, had imposed unpopular customs duties to raise revenues, had irritated the English by favoring the Scotch after the union of the kingdoms in 1604, and had shown a desire and willingness to claim absolute power for the throne. He had established new courts, made law by royal proclamations, and quarreled with the Parliament over the question of religious toleration.

James and the bishops insisted that those who would not wear the regular vestments and use the regular ceremonies should not

be allowed to preach. Thus he gained the ill-will of the Puritans. He also banished the Catholic clergy, and thus became hated by the Catholics, and gave rise to the "Gunpowder Plot" of 1605, whereby a few scoundrels hoped to kill the king and his sons, bringing the little Princess Elizabeth, his daughter, to the throne. The plot was betrayed and Guy Fawkes captured, to be burned in effigy on every Fifth of November since.

With Ireland, too, James had difficulties, and while Milton was yet a little fellow, the king had become cordially hated by a large part of his subjects; with the Puritans he could never be a favorite, and Milton's father, as a conscientious Puritan, was not likely to teach his son blind loyalty to the sovereign. But an actual break with the king did not come for many years, and the boy was meanwhile receiving his education, more interested in the doings of the Romans and Greeks than in the questions of religious practices, taxation, and the conflict between the king and the Parliament.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SCHOOL DAYS IN LONDON

FROM the days when John Milton was learning the alphabet to about his ninth or tenth year he would naturally be little interested in the events of the day, but he must have heard his father speak of Bacon's becoming Lord Chancellor, of Raleigh's expedition to South America in search of gold; of the celebration in Germany of the hundredth year of the Protestant Reformation, of Raleigh's execution; and he could hardly be unaware of the beginning of the Thirty Years' War in his tenth year, for he was a boy of precocious intelligence, and the Puritans in England saw in the politics of the time the first stirrings of a struggle that was sure to involve their own country.

## *In the Days of Milton*

Milton's first lessons were received at home from a Puritan tutor, of whom little is told further than that he came from Essex, and cut *his* hair short, as Aubrey, the old biographer, puts it, leaving the reader to doubt whether *his* means tutor or pupil. No doubt it was the boy who lost his curls, otherwise the matter would hardly be mentioned. Besides, the Jansen portrait of Milton at ten is the only one with short hair. A second tutor was a young curate, Thomas Young, a man of ability and learning. He had been somewhat persecuted for his opinions, was a Scotchman, a Puritan, and in after life became master of one of the colleges at Cambridge. Especially he is to be thanked for having taught the boy to love poetry and to make verses, for which Milton has expressed gratitude in his fourth Latin Elegy, written at the age of eighteen.

When Milton was twelve years old he was sent to school at St. Paul's, in the churchyard of the old cathedral. This had

## *School Days in London*

been founded by Dr. Colet, a friend of Erasmus, over a century before for the free teaching of 153 boys, sons of "poor men." How Milton came to be admitted unless as a paying scholar is not told, for certainly his father was not poor. Lilly, another friend of the great Erasmus, was the first master, and is still remembered as the author of the grammar from which Shakespeare made quotations in several of his plays. In Milton's day the master was a Dr. Gill, who had his son for assistant. This son had distinguished himself at college for his verse-writing, and seems to have been helpful and kind, since Milton writes to him in later life and speaks gratefully of the help derived from him in conversations.

This St. Paul's school still exists, but has been removed to Hammersmith. Among its pupils before Milton were Ben Jonson, Camden, the famous antiquary; John Leland, another earlier student of old times; after Milton were the Duke of Marlbor-

## *In the Days of Milton*

ough, Samuel Pepys, "Junius" (if this name meant Sir Philip Francis), Halley, the astronomer, remembered in the name of "Halley's Comet," and Strype, the church historian.

The whole neighborhood of the school was packed full of the most interesting memorials of old London. First came the Cathedral itself, "Old St. Paul's," built on the site of an ancient St. Paul's church founded in 610. Begun in 1083, the steeple was finished over a century later. It was twice or three times injured by fire, and in 1561 the steeple had been removed, and not replaced in Milton's time, so that he saw a great cross-shaped building with a high central tower. Near it was the celebrated Powle's (or Paul's) Cross, a sort of outdoor pulpit with a canopy, "where papal bulls were promulgated, heretics made to recant and witches to confess," where captured flags of the Armada were displayed; and in the neighborhood were a bishop's palace, a cloister painted with a "dance of

death," and a high bell-tower. It was one of the city's busiest quarters.

The cathedral itself was the resort of all the fashionable loiterers, "gentry, lords and courtiers, and men of all professions," who walked in the middle aisle, called "Duke Humphrey's Walk" from the tomb of Sir John Beauchamp that stood there. From eleven to twelve and from three to six was an ever changing crowd, gossiping and transacting business, even using the font for a counter. The choristers had a custom of demanding money from any who entered the cathedral wearing spurs during divine service! Shakespeare makes Falstaff hire Bardolph here, and Ben Jonson laid here a scene in one of his plays.

Still earlier the cathedral had been even worse, a "common thoroughfare for people with vessels of ale and beer, baskets of bread, fish, flesh, and fruit, men leading mules, horses and other beasts," as one author says; and this only two generations before Milton. There was no livelier place in

## *In the Days of Milton*

all England than St. Paul's and its church-yard, with its school, its bookshops, and its great elm-tree beneath the shade of which the citizens took their ease.

The school itself had a main schoolroom wherein the master sat upon a throne of office known as the "cathedra," and the windows showed the motto, "Aut doce, aut disce, aut discede," meaning, "Learn, teach, or leave." To gain admission boys were examined in reading, writing and the catechism.

Dr. Gill, the headmaster, was not blind to the merits of his own tongue as against Latin, saying, "I honor Latin, but worship the English," and favored retaining good English words instead of "new-fangled ones," and his influence over Milton must have increased the boy's appreciation of the power of his own language, which perhaps was necessary in one who was studying Latin, French, Hebrew and Italian before he went to the University. Both father and son who taught Milton were graduates of

## *School Days in London*

Oxford, and were considered excellent as scholars and as teachers, and Milton was a thorough student at their school, working hard not only during the day but also late at night, as he himself tells us.

As to his youth Milton has an account in his "Defence of the English People," which, written in Latin, has been translated as follows: "My father destined me from a child to the pursuits of literature; and my appetite for knowledge was so voracious that from twelve years of age [he entered St. Paul's at twelve] I hardly ever left my studies, or went to bed before midnight. This primarily led to my loss of sight. My eyes were naturally weak, and I was subject to frequent headaches, which, however, could not chill the ardor of my curiosity or retard the progress of my improvement. My father had me daily instructed in the Grammar school and by other masters at home."

Among the works of his schooldays were two versions of Psalms that have been pre-

## *In the Days of Milton*

served. They were written just before he left school, at the age of fifteen. While admitting that these youthful verses were creditable, Dr. Johnson says in his pompous way: "The products of his vernal fertility have been surpassed by many, and particularly by his contemporary, Cowley. . . . Many have excelled Milton in their first essays who never rose to works like 'Paradise Lost.'" Other critics have been kinder if less just.

Of the home life that went with the schooldays in London we have little information. The members of the household were the father, the mother, Anne, the daughter, older than the poet, John himself, and the little brother Christopher, who was five when John entered school. The father played upon the organ, and in so studious a household there must have been reading aloud either from classic authors or from the religious works then so much in favor. A neighbor to the Miltons was Humphrey Lownes, who was a printer and

## *School Days in London*

publisher at the sign of the Star in Bread street, and he is said to have lent many books to the boy so eager for learning. We have no list of these, but Spenser's poems were certainly among them, and were greatly admired, and the translation by Joshua Sylvester of the "Divine Weeks and Works" of Du Bartas may be mentioned because some have thought it gave Milton hints afterward used in "Paradise Lost."

Among his schoolfellows Milton's best friend was an Italian boy, Charles Diodati, son of a doctor who had been exiled from Italy because he was a Protestant. Charles Diodati went to Oxford University about a year and a half before Milton left school, intending to study medicine. No doubt this friendship had something to do with Milton's lifelong liking for Italy and the Italians, and may have helped him in learning the language in which he early became well skilled. This friend of Milton's afterward practised medicine in London, but died at an early age not especially distinguished.

## *In the Days of Milton*

His uncle, John Diodati, was a noted Italian Protestant, who had translated the Bible into his own tongue about five years before Milton was born, and had been exiled to Geneva.

American readers will remember the date of Milton's entering St. Paul's school by connecting it with the landing of the Pilgrims, in the same year; and they may note the difference between Puritanism and the doctrines of the Pilgrims by considering how the latter were being persecuted, fined, imprisoned and exiled, while such households as that of the Miltos were entirely unmolested, the members attending the regular church services and conforming in nearly every respect to the English church.

In those early days it was the Pilgrims' party that was fighting the battle for liberty of religious opinion, while the Puritans were just beginning their struggle to establish the right of the people of England as against the power of the throne.

King James, during Milton's school days,

## *School Days in London*

was acting largely on the advice of his favorite "Steenie," the Duke of Buckingham, and using all the royal powers to secure the money needed for his extravagances. He granted monopolies of certain trades and manufactures, and these royal privileges were bitterly opposed in Parliament, which defeated many of them.

Among the victims of the fight between king and Commons was Lord Bacon. He was lord chancellor, and gave much good advice, but, says the historian Gardiner, "he had lived to find his advice was never followed." He was accused of bribery and admitted the charges to be technically true, though he denied any wrongdoing. The whole question turned upon the custom of receiving of gifts from suitors; and the best opinion to-day is that Bacon was guilty of carelessness rather than corruption. He was removed from office, fined and imprisoned; but the imprisonment was merely formal and the fine never exacted, his enemies being satisfied with his downfall.

## *In the Days of Milton*

The chief significance of the trial was that it proved the power of the House of Commons was great enough to reach so high an official.

The Commons next interfered with the king in regard to the marriage of his son. James was trying to make an alliance with Spain, while the Commons petitioned him to choose a Protestant princess. The king virtually replied to their petition that the matter was none of their business, whereupon they drew up a protest saying they had the right to discuss all matters of public concern, and entered this in their journal.

Then King James sent for the journal and tore out the pages where the protest was written, and ordered the Parliament to be dissolved. It is not strange that the breach between the king and the people was becoming more serious daily.

In 1623, the year before Milton left St. Paul's school, the king's son, Prince Charles, made a journey to Madrid, intending to marry the sister of King Philip IV.

## *School Days in London*

There were many negotiations, turning upon the treatment to be granted the English Catholics in case the marriage was allowed by the pope and the king of Spain, but at last Prince Charles lost his patience and returned to England to report the failure of the Spanish marriage and alliance.

This brought joy to the English people, and upon his return, early in October, "all London was alight with bonfires in her delight at the failure of the Spanish match," and even so quiet a household as that of the Miltos must have rejoiced at the failure of the attempt to restore Catholicism in England. We should be sorry to think that the studious little John Milton was busy over his books rather than dancing about the bonfires.

Later in the same month there was a serious accident in the house of Baron Hunsdon at Black Friars. Three hundred people had gathered in an upper room to hear a sermon by Father Drury, and their weight caused the floor to give way. Nine-

## *In the Days of Milton*

ty-four of the congregation were killed. This was known as "The Fatal Vespers." The Protestants chose to regard the accident as a divine judgment against the Catholics for holding the service, though, the house being then occupied by the French Ambassador, there would seem to have been nothing illegal in the proceeding; and the Catholics considered the fall of the floor to be due to a Protestant plot. In modern days most of us would attribute the fall of the floor to criminal carelessness in over-loading.

In America the years of Milton's stay at St. Paul's school, from 1620 to 1624, were notable for the great massacre of the settlers in Virginia; for the first permanent settlements on Manhattan Island and Long Island; the building of Fort Orange on the site of Albany. In Europe, Richelieu became cardinal of France; Molière was born in Paris, the son of a furniture dealer; Pascal was born in Auvergne.

In England the year 1623 saw the first

## *School Days in London*

collected edition of Shakespeare's plays; the first newspaper was published in 1622; and the microscope and thermometer came into use. As to the other events, those which related most closely to Milton have been already noted, but Americans may be reminded that New Amsterdam was founded in the same year that Milton went to Cambridge.

With the end of his schooldays at St. Paul's his boyhood was over and his youth began.

## CHAPTER V

### MILTON AT CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

HAVING finished his schooldays, in order to carry out the family's design of preparing Milton for the church it was decided that he should go to Cambridge University. There has been much discussion why this choice was made instead of sending the young man to Oxford, but the best opinion seems to be that it was precisely because of the intention to make him a clergyman, and of course a Puritan clergyman, that Cambridge was preferred. The more liberal men were found among the Fellows of the Cambridge colleges. Indeed, it has been pointed out by more than one writer that Cambridge was the source of the more lasting elements of the Puritan movement. Here were edu-

## *At Cambridge University*

cated Thomas Hooker, the founder of the Connecticut colony; John Harvard, who gave his name to the oldest American college; Francis Higginson, a minister in Salem, Massachusetts, who was the ancestor of Colonel Higginson, the American writer; John Winthrop; President Chauncy of Massachusetts, and Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, whose entry in the college preceded Milton's by only a year. As to the Plymouth Colony, Elder William Brewster and John Robinson, their clergyman, were also Cambridge men, and so were many Separatist preachers.

As Lucia Mead, author of "Milton's England," declares, it was these men and a few Oxford scholars of similar opinions who were the spiritual fathers of Adams, Warren, Otis, Hancock, Emerson, Lowell, Phillips and Sumner, to select only a few of the many she names.

This statement will indicate without the need of any long discussion the nature of the opinions which made up the atmosphere

## *In the Days of Milton*

of Cambridge during the seven years Milton was in residence.

He entered as what is called a "lesser pensioner," that is, he was in the middle class as regards his circumstances, not being compelled to pay the highest rates, nor taking advantage of the very low terms offered to that class of students known as "sizars." His name was enrolled upon the books of Christ's College on February 12, 1624, but as this date is Old Style, we must remember that, according to our reckoning, the year 1625 would have begun in the preceding January, instead of in the following March. The charges which he paid amounted to about fifty pounds a year, equivalent to more than a thousand dollars now.

Among the sixteen colleges of Cambridge, Christ's College was one of the largest and most popular. It had been, even in his time, established more than a hundred years, being, like many of the English colleges, an outgrowth of an old religious house.

## *At Cambridge University*

Indeed, the two great universities of England owed their origin to communities of churchmen gathered together for the purpose of leading religious lives or devoting themselves to study in preparation for holy orders. When the Reformation had scattered these men abroad and at the same time had thrown open the gates of learning to the lay inhabitants, it was natural that the old religious foundations should be, either gradually or at once, transformed into institutions of learning.

The very first institution to which Christ's College can be traced was a small school founded by a London rector, William Bingham. But although this can be dated back to 1436, the school had by the beginning of the sixteenth century dwindled to four scholars beside its proctor, or master. Extinction would have been its fate in a few years except for the effort of Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who is said to have been bred at this school, and consequently had an eye to its interests.

## *In the Days of Milton*

Seeing its woful state, he had recommended the little institution to the Lady Margaret Beaufort. She supplied funds to maintain a master, twelve fellows, and forty-seven scholars, and she has ever since been regarded as the founder of the college, there being preserved four portraits of her, one of which hangs in the college chapel. Bishop Fisher also is commemorated by a portrait, and both he and the patroness appear in the stained glass of an oriole window of the hall. As to the past history of the college itself, it is said to have been "peaceful and comparatively uneventful." It had not been without distinguished alumni, some of the best known being the martyr Latimer; the antiquarian Leland; Harrington, known as the translator of the Italian poet, Ariosto; and, according to some authorities, Sir Philip Sidney.

Milton's journey to Cambridge was probably made by coach, very likely one of the coaches belonging to that Hobson upon whom the phrase "Hobson's choice" has

## *At Cambridge University*

conferred immortality, and concerning whom Milton wrote his well-known "Epitaph"—which does not seem to us a striking display of humor. In thinking of the journey, we must picture to ourselves the lumbering vehicle making its way slowly over the boggy places and unmended parts of the road, or dashing along gaily when there was a smoother stretch before it.

The experiences of young Milton must have been much like those of "Tom Brown" in going to Rugby, or of "David Copperfield" to Salem House School—for though coaches were rare in Milton's youth coaching did not greatly change until steam put an end to it as the main means of travel.

Professor Garnett, speaking of the aspect of the town of Cambridge in Milton's time, says that it was "probably not ill-represented by Lyne's colored map of half a century earlier in the British Museum. Piles of stately architecture . . . tower . . . over narrow, tortuous, pebble-paved streets, bordered with diminutive white-

## *In the Days of Milton*

fronted, red-tiled dwellings, mere dolls' houses in comparison." Sheep and swine, it is said, were not uncommon in the little village, and green spaces were interspersed among the colleges. The buildings of the college were arranged, as was usual in the old ecclesiastical system, in a quadrangle about a central court. From the street a high gateway, defended by a strong tower, gave access to the court upon which opened the rooms of students, the dining hall and offices of the college. An old engraving, not far from Milton's time, gives us an excellent idea of the general appearance of the building.

An outer gateway led through the square tower, and this was flanked by long three-story buildings having steeply-pitched roofs and dormer windows. For the days when each great building might have to serve as a fortress were not yet far in the past, and defensive towers and battlements remained features of all large buildings and even of many country houses. More than one gen-

## *At Cambridge University*

tleman's country seat was soon to be the scene of regular siege operations.

Milton's rooms were on the left side of the court, as one enters the street gate, the first-floor rooms on the first stair. They were reached by a narrow stairway, and consisted of a small study, whose two windows looked out on the court, a tiny bedroom and cupboard. The latest writers on Cambridge say that the rooms remain to-day in much the same state as in Milton's time, nearly three centuries ago.

As to the way in which he spent his days, we can obtain a very clear idea of it from the detailed account given in the voluminous "Life of Milton" by Professor Masson. He tells us that the day began with chapel at five o'clock in the morning, which was now and then lengthened by a learned discourse pronounced by one of the Fellows of the college.

After chapel, the students returned to their rooms for a slight breakfast, consisting, probably, of bacon and eggs or other

## *In the Days of Milton*

light food. The same custom exists to-day in the English colleges. Then the time until the dinner, at noon, was given to lectures and debates. The dinner was taken in the large college hall on the other side of the quadrangle from the gateway, a lofty room hung with old portraits, and, in the case of Christ's College, a very comfortable and imposing apartment. The afternoons were usually free, the students being obliged to report only for supper and evening service in the chapel.

There was not the same simplicity of dress as at present, many of the students choosing to wear blue or green or red or mixed colors, without uniformity except in their hanging sleeves. And even these bright colors were not all of the dandyism. They sported ribbons upon their shoes, wore their hair long and powdered, and put wide ruffs about their necks and "fair, feminine cuffs at the wrists." If such dandies were common, we wonder in what costume Milton himself must have appeared in or-

## *At Cambridge University*

der to win the nickname, "The Lady." His portrait, which still hangs in Christ's College, shows him with long hair and a broad lace collar, but in nothing does the costume offend good taste.

Certainly we have no reason to think that it was because of any effeminacy of character that the nickname was bestowed upon him, for we learn by his own modest account of himself that, though a little undersized and slight, he was very well built and active, and especially was an accomplished swordsman. He tells us that he daily practised himself with the weapon until he felt that "armed with it, as he generally was, he was in the habit of thinking himself quite a match for any one, even were he the most robust, and of being perfectly at his ease as to any injury that any one could offer him, man to man."

His hair was auburn, curling, and long; his face was oval, his eyes dark grey, his complexion fair. As he was always distinguished for the purity of his life, a not

## *In the Days of Milton*

too common characteristic among the college men of his time, it may be that he owed his nickname to most praiseworthy qualities.

As to the course of study at the college, mathematics, which has since become the distinguishing glory of the Cambridge course, was not much cultivated. What is called "scholasticism" was still in full sway at both universities. Perhaps the shortest explanation of the word may be given by saying that it consisted in the study of the world, of men, and of nature, indirectly—rather through the eyes of great teachers of the past than by direct observation.

Still, Cambridge had gleams of the new light and was considered more liberal in its studies than Oxford, less wedded to the traditions of the past. Milton was always, above all things, an advocate and adherent of liberty, and, naturally, he soon came into collision with the set ways of the college authorities, so far as they were represented by his own tutor. This man, William

## *At Cambridge University*

Chappell, afterwards became the Bishop of York, and it has been judged from his writings that he was a rather pedantic, unsympathetic man. With Chappell Milton certainly had a serious disagreement, and Aubrey, one of his early biographers, the same gossiping Aubrey from whom we derive many uncertain traditions in regard to Shakespeare, relates that the tutor treated Milton with "unkindness," words which are explained by the brief interlined statement, "whipt him." Dr. Johnson, in his "Lives of the Poets" has been much blamed for giving full credence to this statement in the words: "I am ashamed to relate what I fear is true, that Milton was one of the last students in either university that suffered the public indignity of corporal correction." But it must be remembered that the universities in the time of the Stuarts had hardly yet become, so far as discipline is concerned, more than large public schools, and that Milton was still a boy about sixteen years old. It seems that the

## *In the Days of Milton*

story of a caning is in no wise improbable, though there appears to be no foundation for Johnson's statement that this consisted in a *public* whipping. Whatever is the truth about the affair, it is known that for a while Milton left Cambridge; but he could not have been officially sent away, or what is known as "rusticated," because the college books contain no record showing that he lost credit for his term. Upon his return he took another tutor by the name of Nathaniel Tovey, said to be a talented man.

There are in Milton's poems certain references to Cambridge, showing that, for a while at least, he considered the town an unattractive place, and unsuited to one with poetic feelings. From the old critic, Warton, we learn that Milton hated the place, and was not only offended at the college discipline, but had even conceived a dislike to the face of the country, or fields, about Cambridge. He certainly complains that the fields have no soft shades to attract the Muses, and there is something peevish in

## *At Cambridge University*

his criticism that Cambridge was a place quite incompatible with the votaries of Phœbus. The passage occurs in his first "Elegy," a Latin poem addressed to his old school-fellow, then a student at Oxford, Charles Diodati. The lines are:

"Nuda nec arva placent umbrasque negantia molles;  
Quam male Phœbicolis convenit ille locus!"

They may be translated:

"Neither do I find pleasing the bare fields which  
grant no soothing shade;  
How little the place befits followers of Apollo!"

In order to understand these lines, we must remember that many of the trees about Cambridge were pollard willows, which gave little or no shade. In his later writings, however, there are a number of passages showing that whatever may have been his feeling toward Cambridge during his earlier years, he afterward came to look back upon his days there with pleasure, and considered that on the whole he had been well treated by the authorities.

## *In the Days of Milton*

His residence at Cambridge covered altogether seven years, from 1625 to 1632. During his first year occurred the death of King James. The historian Green tells us that this first of the Stuart kings died with the consciousness of failure. He had opposed the power of Parliament in vain, and left it even stronger than at the beginning of his reign. He had opposed the Puritans, and Puritanism was becoming ever more powerful. Attempting to make the privileges of the crown greater than ever, he had been compelled to stand by while the Commons had impeached and degraded his ministers of state, their only means of attacking the throne. Worst result of all, his conduct had lost for the crown that loyalty upon which the Tudor monarchs had been able to rely in every stress. The courts of the church had by him been so dominated that he had conferred upon them a part of his own unpopularity. As to the position of England toward European powers, James had succeeded in losing

## *At Cambridge University*

nearly all the prestige that had been built up under Elizabeth.

But the historian shrewdly says that the most fatal mistake made by the first Stuart king was in that step which James regarded as the most successful of all his policy—his son's French marriage. For the new queen, Henrietta Maria, brought to strengthen the easy nature of his son Charles a "fierce and despotic temper," that tinctured with animosity his whole long struggle against the growing power of the English people.

In these events Milton was keenly interested, though it is not likely that he or any of the young fellows at Cambridge then foresaw that the struggle between king and Commons would result in open war. Milton was a hard student, and besides his regular work, wrote in Latin many letters to his old school friend, Diodati, and to his teachers, Drs. Gill and Young. He was also beginning to produce poetical work of the highest value. From 1625 to 1632,

## *In the Days of Milton*

the years of his college course, appeared the poems, "On the Death of a Fair Infant," "A Vacation Exercise," "Ode to the Nativity," and the lines on Shakespeare that were prefixed to the plays in 1632.

The "Fair Infant" was his own niece, the first child of his sister, Mistress Phillips, and the lines contain a reference to the plague that then so raged in London as to cause Parliament to hold its sessions in Oxford.

No account of the days preceding the nineteenth century can be complete without some notice of the terrible visitations of the plague, although it is probably true that different epidemics have been described by this same name. Only five years before Milton's birth it had caused the death of thirty-eight thousand people in London, and the plague was also widely spread throughout England. The same year saw the death of one million persons in Egypt. Traces of this great visitation lasted, even in London, for some eight years, nearly

## *At Cambridge University*

twelve thousand, for example, having died in 1609, when Milton was in his babyhood. The next great attack came in 1625, and was nearly as fatal to London citizens. This is the visitation of the disease already referred to.

Throughout Milton's life we shall see references showing the prevalence of plague from time to time until we come to 1665, when Milton was about sixty years old, and at this time there was so severe an epidemic that it has been known in English history ever since as "The Great Plague." It is estimated that this caused the death of seventy thousand people. We have accounts from the pens of De Foe, Pepys, and Evelyn of the conditions that prevailed in London during this last and greatest attack of the dreaded disease. And from this we are able to judge of the conditions that existed during even the lighter visitations. Space will not permit us to picture even briefly what is meant by the statement that "the plague prevailed" at any given time in

## *In the Days of Milton*

England. It will be enough to remind the reader of the pitiful custom of imprisoning the inmates of an infected house in their dwelling and marking upon the door "God have mercy upon us," beneath the symbol of the cross; the taking away of the dead for burial in great pits during the night; the paying of money into vases of vinegar set upon counters of shops as a means of disinfection; the incidents of cowardice or villainy, and the even more frequent exhibitions of devoted heroism. To the honor of many English physicians it should be remembered that, despite the horror with which all were inspired by the mysterious visitation, many of them were brave enough to study its symptoms and course minutely, and even to risk their lives in dissecting the bodies of the dead.

It is fortunate that we have in the diaries of Pepys and Evelyn careful accounts of their own experiences, and that De Foe, in his almost equally true fiction, has preserved for us a picture of London during the

## *At Cambridge University*

plague, for, otherwise, owing to the familiarity of men of the time with this horrible state of affairs, we could not reconstruct any rightful representation of a town or city during these epidemics. The old writers, for the most part, seem to look upon the plague as a mysterious and unavoidable visitation of nature. Even in our own times there have been outbreaks indicating that this old foe of mankind is not yet killed, but is kept in check only by the vigilance of medical science.

The child of whom Milton writes seems to have owed its death not to this disease but to the severity of a protracted cold season that was coincident with it. Probably this child died in the sister's house, which was in the Strand, near Charing Cross. Milton's poem contains much more evidence of classical learning and skill in versifying than proof of deep human feeling.

Besides the poems already named, Milton produced a number of literary works in Latin, some of which were read before the

## *In the Days of Milton*

members of his college. The ceremony for which he prepared the piece now generally known by the name of "A Vacation Exercise," was a student's occasion of festivity and fun. The presiding officer over this college revel was known as the "Father," and much of the speech which Milton prepared for one of these occasions is made up of joking references to be appreciated only by his fellow students. In short, we may look upon the lines called "A Vacation Exercise" as part of a serio-comic address written for delivery by the college boy before his fellows during a proceeding not unlike many mock ceremonies that exist in American colleges of our own day. Old Yale men will remember with affection their "Thanksgiving Jubilee" as an example of a similar merrymaking in an American university.

Milton's "Exercise" is therefore not to be taken too seriously. The one work of his college days which remains of vital value to us is his grand ode, "On the Morn-

## *At Cambridge University*

ing of the Nativity." It was composed when Milton was twenty-one and had been more than five years at Cambridge. From another production, addressed to his friend Diodati, we learn that this ode was begun on Christmas day, 1629. Henry Hallam, while thinking it less popular than most of the author's works, considers it perhaps the finest ode in the language. Speaking of its grandeur, simplicity, breadth of treatment and ordered imagination, he calls it "Pindaric," meaning that it is worthy of being classed with the work of him who is considered the unequalled master of this form of poetry.

## CHAPTER VI

### MILTON'S RESIDENCE AT HORTON

**I**N "Milton's England," the very interesting book before quoted, the author tells us that there were in Cambridge during Milton's stay signs of less strictness in following church doctrine. She gives as illustrations the facts that meat was eaten on fast days (Friday), that the clergy attached to the college did not hesitate now and then to invent their own prayers, instead of following the regular liturgy, and that the congregations contained many who were lax in small observances considered important by strict ritualists.

As not many years after this we find Milton strongly in sympathy with Puritan doctrine, it is not likely that as a student he was shocked or offended by these signs of

## *Residence at Horton*

falling away from strict churchmanship. He severely criticises those students who were preparing to be clergymen for taking part in theatrical shows. He speaks of them "on the stage, writhing and unboning their clergy limbs to all the antic and dishonest gestures of trinculos, and buffoons. . . . Where they acted and over-acted among other young scholars I was a spectator. They thought themselves excellent men, and I thought them fools." These words are taken from the life of Milton, written by Toland late in the seventeenth century. And yet, within a few years, we shall find Milton composing masques to be performed before the inmates of certain noble houses, so we may be sure that his objection to the students' acting was simply based upon his belief that it was improper for students of divinity to appear upon the stage in undignified rôles.

While he was ever a reformer and ready to speak his mind concerning whatever he considered an abuse, yet his excellent schol-

## *In the Days of Milton*

arship and irreproachable behavior while at Cambridge gained him first the respect and afterwards even the affection of the authorities and the students. In several places where he refers to Cambridge life and speaks of disagreements with the authorities, it is always upon some question concerning the studies pursued at college, and he never refers to any disagreements upon personal matters. Milton in later years writes that he found "more than ordinary respect, above any of my equals, at the hands of those courteous and learned men, the fellows of that college wherein I spent seven years."

He refers also to the wish of the college authorities that he should remain among them after completing his student days; but the regulations of the college made this impossible unless he should take orders, and by this time Milton had decided that he would not go into the church. In order to take his degrees, he had to sign the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England,

## *Residence at Horton*

and this he must have done. It seems, therefore, that his objection to the church as a career came from his fear that it would affect his liberty of opinion, rather than from any fixed objection to its declared doctrines. His own words are: "He who would take orders must subscribe slave."

The position of the church at about the time Milton left Cambridge was such that he felt no man could attach himself to it officially without sacrificing his independence. The church was entirely under the control of the celebrated Archbishop Laud. Opinions differ widely as to Laud's character, but there is no question that his methods were those of an autocrat. Believing that the struggle between Puritanism and the church was one wherein the very life of the institution was at stake, Laud enforced by persecution the strictest obedience to all church mandates and requirements and suppressed every form of liberalism. In this he was entirely supported by the king and by the ecclesiastical courts, and Pur-

## *In the Days of Milton*

tanism was not yet strong enough to make any fight against so able a man when backed by all the power of the throne and the church.

When we read of persecution in the days of John Milton, we must remember that what is signified by the word is something more than the mere fining or even imprisoning of offenders. England was not yet so civilized as to be free from the barbarism of the Middle Ages. Offending clergymen were pilloried, whipped, and at times were branded with hot irons upon the cheeks or otherwise infamously treated.

This severity of the law was general in those days. The penalty of death was inflicted for many offences which now would be punishable only by a short imprisonment. In Milton's life mention is made of the execution of a child nine years old for having set fire to some buildings, and we must not err upon the side of moderation in imagining how offending church members were treated.

## *Residence at Horton*

Milton was now in the position of a young man without any definite vocation. Fortunately, the question of making a living did not press him to a decision, his father, the London scrivener, having so prospered that he was able to retire from the more active part of his office work. He had taken into partnership a young man capable of looking after the London business, and was thus free to retire from the city to a country home. He had rented a comfortable house "on the site of the Byrken House, near the church," in the little village of Horton, Buckinghamshire, which was less than a day's journey from London, and within sight of Windsor Castle.

Horton seems to have been a typical English village, consisting of a central open space where the main roads met and about which clustered the more important town buildings—the tavern, the church—standing a little back from the thoroughfare, and the better residences. The country round about had a profusion of that rich verdure

## *In the Days of Milton*

of which England and Ireland alone seem to have the secret. It was a well-watered country, and combined all the beauties of quiet valley scenery in a fertile, settled land. There were beautiful groves of trees, wide expanses of meadow land, shady lanes, softly-moulded hills and prosperous farms, with their low, thatched roofs all clustered about the central church tower.

To-day we cannot be sure that any of the town remains except the old church where the Milton family attended. The long low building extending back from the battlemented tower and watch tower seems to American eyes peculiarly English.

Milton's brother, Christopher, had resolved to enter the legal profession, and Milton, having given up the church, decided to prepare himself for a career devoted wholly to scholarship and literature. Not only some of his friends, but even his father, must have expressed disapproval of his course, for in letters, and in the Latin poem, "Ad Patrem," we find the poet justi-

## *Residence at Horton*

fying himself for his choice. This poem to his father, of which Cowper made a translation, is a very graceful recognition of the father's kindness in allowing him, free from the cares of life, to give himself up to study and reflection amid the scenes of a beautiful English country town.

Although Milton himself speaks of this retirement as a time of idleness, and reproaches himself in his "Sonnet on Arriving at the Age of Twenty-three," we are sure that no young man of the present day would like to undertake the tasks which the young Englishman completed in the next few years; for it was a time of severe classical study, to say nothing of the production of the great poems, "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," and "Lycidas," of the fragment called "Arcades," the masque, "Comus," and a number of shorter pieces.

These, added to the poems which he had already produced while at Cambridge, make up an exceedingly creditable amount of poetical work for a young man hardly

## *In the Days of Milton*

more than twenty years of age. Mr. Garnett, a recent biographer, says: . “We may be sure that he read the classics of all the languages which he understood. His copies of Euripides, Pindar, Aratus and Lycophron, are, or have been recently extant with marginal notes, proof that he weighed what he read.” We know also from his letters that he went deeply into history, especially that of the Greeks. He also found time to make trips to London for lessons in mathematics and music.

Of course, a life so studious and in so quiet a place, has not left many traces except in the learning which it enabled Milton to show in the work of his later years. From the time he left Cambridge until that of his first trip abroad, we may count more than five years as given to study and reflection at his father’s house in Horton. The only happenings needing to be recorded are the poems produced during this period, the death of his mother, in April, 1637, and that of one of his college friends, Edward

## *Residence at Horton*

King, on August 10th of the same year. Young King must have been an attractive personality, since his death produced a volume of tributes to his memory from a number of his young college friends, and, in particular, was the occasion of the composition of "Lycidas," the only one of them worthy to survive in the annals of English poetry.

In the editions of Milton's poems will be found fuller accounts of the circumstances under which were written the minor pieces produced during his life at Horton, but in regard to the more important of these a brief account must be given, since they were written for occasions that serve to give us an insight into the conditions of the young poet's life and surroundings after leaving college.

It has been remarked that Milton seemed to require some external motive to induce him to undertake any poetical work. He never wrote simply for the sake of producing verse, but always in response to some

## *In the Days of Milton*

external invitation or pressure. It will be interesting to consider in regard to the works composed by him between his graduation and his visit to the continent what influences brought him to their composition.

In regard to the Horton poems, as we may call them, it will be necessary to say here only a few words, telling of their relation to Milton's life and the causes that produced them. The two poems, "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," are, of course, companion pieces and have been variously interpreted. Each bears on the surface a very plain meaning, for the lines in each case deal with a day in the life of a youth affected either by a spirit of cheerfulness or of melancholy. "L'Allegro" describes, in general, any rural day, while its companion piece finds its beginning in the evening hours. But some have seen in the two poems a reflection of Milton's state of mind when he was yet hesitating in regard to his future career. An English editor thus puts the question which the young poet is be-

## *Residence at Horton*

lieved to have had before his mind: “Was he to walk with those who cheerfully plodded on and took what came of sunshine or of storm, using his superior culture as a solace and delight, or with those other spirits, more sombre and more stern, who ‘scorn delights and live laborious days’?”

This is not to say that Milton was in doubt whether to cast in his lot with the Puritans, for, in raising the question he had rather in view the purpose to which he was to devote his own life and his poetical powers. The discussion in his own mind has given rise to a fair comparison of the two lives he had proposed to himself, and it is their respective delights which he considers in the two poems we have mentioned. There is, in the Clarendon Press edition of Milton’s poems, a long discussion setting forth the images wherein Milton embodied the delights to be found in each course of life. Too long to quote here, this introduction to the poems, by R. C. Browne, is ably written and well worth reading, as it en-

## *In the Days of Milton*

ables us to see in the lines an importance they would otherwise lack, and from it we may gather a better idea of what was meant by the Puritan movement in England and how it affected the mind of a man of high principles, wide learning, and sensitive conscience such as was Milton, even in these early days.

In the same way there is an inner meaning in the playfulness of the masques which Milton wrote at about the same time. The first of these, entitled "Arcades," is no more than a fragment, but it is looked upon as in a way a forerunner of the more elaborate "Comus." It is believed to have been written certainly within the three years preceding 1634. Each was written in honor of a noble lady, both belonging to the same family. One was the Countess Dowager of Derby, then about seventy years of age. To her the poet Spenser had dedicated his "Tears of the Muses," and to her two sisters were also dedicated two other poems by the same author. Her husband was

## *Residence at Horton*

Lord Strange, the patron of a group of players and well known to Nash, Green, and other of Shakespeare's associates. He had before his death become Earl of Derby. After her husband's death, she married an eminent lawyer and statesman, Sir Thomas Egerton, who afterwards acquired several other titles and was lord chancellor to King James. One of the countess dowager's daughters married the son of her second husband; another daughter was the wife of Lord Hastings, who became Earl of Huntington, and thus acquired possession of the estates, Ashby de la Zouch, known to all readers of "Ivanhoe" as the scene of the tournament described in that novel. To read of the various descendants and connections of this noble lady is like studying several pages of "Burke's Peerage." And there is no reason why we should burden our memories with their names.

Some of the younger relatives of the countess dowager had determined to pre-

## *In the Days of Milton*

pare a festivity in her honor at her country estate at Ashbridge, Hertfordshire.

Masques, after having been for a time in less favor than ordinary plays, were the usual form which entertainments took in the country houses of the nobility. The masque was something like an opera; that is, it was a formal entertainment consisting of poetical text set to music and arranged as a dramatic spectacle. So far as the music of Milton's masques was concerned, we need know only the circumstance that it was the work of a musician named Henry Lawes, attached to the Chapel Royal, and also enjoying the friendship and patronage of the countess' family. Lawes was celebrated in his time as a composer, and was very popular. He had set to music songs by many noted poets, and is mentioned by Herrick as well as by Milton and other poets. It is believed that Milton, probably because of his father's career as a composer, had long been intimate with this Henry Lawes and by him was asked to prepare the

## *Residence at Horton*

text for the masque to be given at the countess' home.

If the masque was written about 1630, Milton was then twenty-two, and Lawes thirty years of age, and it was natural that he should be appealed to to furnish the libretto for the entertainment. Both the "Arcades" and "Comus" were produced in this way. The "Arcades" was given in the open air before the mansion known as Harefield House, in the presence of the aged lady in whose honor it was composed. The "Arcades" may have been finished by another writer; at all events, what Milton has written breaks off in the middle. But "Comus," which is a much more ambitious production, was designed for a more important occasion, and has come complete from Milton's hand. It deserves the closest study, as the story of its production in Ludlow Castle gives an excellent idea of the entertainments given by the great nobles just before the civil war.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE VISIT TO THE CONTINENT

MILTON'S life divides into well defined periods. So far we have seen him a school-boy in the centre of London; a young collegian living his own life in Cambridge until he had won the esteem of his associates, and convinced them of his unusual ability; a quiet student and a poet in the retirement of his father's house at Horton.

This third period had shown the natural bent of his mind when guided rather by tastes than by a sense of duty. The five years in Horton had been marked by steady growth in poetic power. The minor poems were succeeded by the marvelous pair, "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," in which the young poet set forth his choice in life,

and these by "Comus," a proof that in a form of composition often chosen for the most frivolous conceits, Milton could preach the doctrines he believed. In "Lycidas," again, it was not enough to express grief for his friend's death, and Milton makes the lines a means of attacking the corruption of the churchmen.

Each of his poems seems thus to be the expression of an opinion, and to be written because Milton felt that he should speak out. Indeed, he described himself as "by nature slow and reluctant to write." He had decided to devote his life to writing, and to writing with purpose; but he had no wish to write until fully prepared, and was resolved to make his preparation thorough. In 1637 his mother died, and it is probable Milton would have remained with his father except that his brother Christopher came with his wife to make their home at Horton, possibly because of the prevalence of the plague in London. This left the elder son free, and it was natural that John

## *In the Days of Milton.*

Milton should take advantage of his freedom to visit foreign countries, especially Italy, then still regarded as the home of learning. There were in those days few facilities for carrying baggage unless one traveled with his own caravan, and Milton's only companion was a single servant. His father made him a reasonable allowance for his expenses, and Milton left England fully prepared to extract all possible benefit from his journey.

The fifteen months preceding Milton's departure had been eventful for him, and for his country. In January, 1637, the Countess of Derby died at Harefield House, where "Arcades" had been performed; in February the elder Milton had been engaged in a lawsuit respecting some trust funds confided to him and was cleared of blame; in April Milton lost his mother, and not long afterward came the visitation of the plague, causing deaths even at Horton.

Of public events in England, Milton

must have been interested in the death of Ben Jonson, and his burial, upright, in the aisle of the Abbey; in the ordinance forbidding Puritans to emigrate, and especially in the failure of the attempt to force a form of church service upon the Scotch churches. He may have heard how the woman Jenny Geddes showed her pious indignation by hurling her little folding stool at the minister, and he must have known of the riots beginning in Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh. The trial of John Hampden for refusing to pay the ship-money tax took place in December, and was no doubt eagerly discussed by the household at Horton, for Milton would understand that Hampden's resistance was really a fight for the people against the king, since it tested the power of the throne to raise money without calling upon Parliament. There was a great vessel, the "Sovereign of the Seas," launched in October, which afterward became a noted warship in the annals of the navy; but it is thought that the people con-

sidered her an extravagance, and that this belief caused some of the opposition to the ship-money taxes. John Evelyn speaks of riding to Rochester and Chatham to see this vessel, "the richest that ever spread cloth before the wind, and especially for this remarkable, that her building cost his Majesty the affections of his subjects, who quarreled with him for a trifle, refusing to contribute either to their own safety or to his glory."

An event making the year notable was the printing by Lawes of Milton's "Comus," though that title was not used, the poem being called only "A Mask Presented at Ludlow Castle," and signed "J. M."; and the death of Edward King, commemorated by "Lycidas," belongs to August of this same year, though the elegy was not published until 1638.

Just before leaving England, Milton sent the quarto of forty pages that contained "Comus" to Sir Henry Wotton, who was the Provost of Eton College. This old

## *Visit to the Continent*

knight of seventy years of age had been abroad for many years as ambassador and must have met Milton not long before receiving the book, as he expresses his pleasure in discovering that the poem was by his new acquaintance, and writes to Milton a letter of extravagant praise and gratitude. Sir Henry's praise meant much, as he was himself an author and considered an able critic, besides being known to both the fashionable and the literary world in England and the Continent.

Provided with letters of introduction from Sir Henry Wotton and other friends, attended by his servant, and probably carrying all his baggage in a small chest or case not too large to be borne upon a horse's back, Milton set off in April, 1638, intending to go first to Paris, probably by the old route that would take him to London, thence to Canterbury and then to Dover, where lay the packet running to Calais. His experiences upon the road were likely to be uneventful, being only along well trav-

## *In the Days of Milton*

eled routes from one tavern to another. There were as yet few established stage-coaches, and traveling by coach was unusual and expensive, being practised mainly by the great nobles. In fact, even a generation later, traveling more luxuriously than on horseback was considered effeminate and unworthy of a man in full health and vigor.

We might wish that Milton had followed the advice of James Howell, author of the "Familiar Letters," and had kept a full diary or had written minutely to his friends on account of his experiences, so that we might see the Stuarts' England as he saw it.

In Evelyn's and in Pepys' "Diaries" we have a view of the times, but both were royalists, and could not see with Milton's eyes; besides, neither could realize that the world would change so greatly within two or three centuries, and their way of life become as foreign to us as the life of the Roman's and Greeks to them. The unusual things we know, for they were recorded;

## *Visit to the Continent*

but the minor, trifling happenings of every day, familiar to every one, being undescribed remain undiscoverable by antiquarians. Shakespeare's plays, for example, present many puzzles of this nature. We do not know exactly what "sack" was, though it is a wine mentioned familiarly by all seventeenth century writers, and we can guess nearly what it must have been.

John Milton, dressed for his journey, must have been provided with a good broad-brimmed hat and stout cloak for protection against rain and wind. His breeches were short, and over his stockings, probably black or gray, because Puritanically inclined men avoided the bright colors preferred by Royalists, he would wear long riding boots with spurs. Since square-toed shoes were fashionable, Milton is likely to have chosen pointed toes. He wore a leather belt, for suspenders did not exist; and so skillful a swordsman would not be without his weapon on a journey. Pistols he may have had, though these are less

## *In the Days of Milton*

likely except in a trip considered dangerous. His collar was plain, what is known as a falling band, tied at the front with tasseled cord.

The roads were likely to be bad even at best, almost impassable in marshy districts. We read in Pepys' "Diary" that often parties had to go in single file along a narrow strip of firm ground, to keep out of the quaggy spots, and this made night traveling dangerous.

Once arrived at the inn, the travelers would find good quarters, for food was plentiful and not dear. The furniture of the time was usually made to last, of good quality, and well upholstered, and inns were well kept and clean. A modern traveler might find even to-day taverns in rural England not greatly differing from those of Milton's time save that kerosene lamps have replaced candles, coal fires are commoner, and clocks are not curiosities. The differences between his time and ours would be found mainly in dress, in our greater variety of food, and in ways of speaking.

Crossing the English Channel to France was in those days something of a voyage, the passage being made in small sail-boats, and those were fortunate who happened upon calm weather, since there was time enough for a landsman to experience all the pangs of sea-sickness.

Arrived in France, Milton goes at once to Paris to deliver the letters of introduction given by Sir Henry Wotton, or his other friends, one being to Lord Scudamore, the English Ambassador to Louis XIII, whose power was then administered by the great Cardinal Richelieu. The France and Paris of Milton's visit are those of "D'Artagnan" and the "Musketeers," and in the pages of Dumas we find a picture of the land and the city. If it be not in all respects a true picture yet it is a portraiture so vivid that it will give us a better idea of the life of the times than is found in any historical work.

The Paris of 1638 was, like all great European cities of that day, a vast walled

## *In the Days of Milton*

fortress. There was an outer line of ramparts inclosing somewhat open fields, and an inner wall defending the more thickly settled streets. So far as the houses, streets and general customs are concerned, there was not a marked difference between the English and the French capital. From the letters of James Howell, written in 1620, one might argue that Paris was not even so clean as London, and that there was more traffic in the highways, more mud, and mud of a peculiarly unsavory odor. Howell says "it may be smelt many miles off." He likewise says Paris seems to have more inhabitants than London because the French capital is round in area, so that "the passengers wheel about and meet oftener than they used to do in the long continued streets of London." One notable building, the Palais Cardinal, was then being finished by Richelieu. It became, when presented to the king to calm his jealousy of its magnificence, the famous Palais Royal in which so much French history was transacted; but it

has been destroyed and rebuilt so often that the present colonnade of shops and cafés is little like what Milton saw.

Though Milton's visit was eighteen years later than Howell's letter, it is likely that there had been little change in the meantime. Certainly some of the dangers of the night in Paris streets as recounted by Howell would fit very readily into the pages of "The Three Musketeers." Milton as a quiet and unassuming student probably kept indoors o' nights, and we have no annals of any sword-play between the young English poet and any cavalier of the style of Aramis or Porthos. Nor should we know it if he saw the young Molière, then a quiet student of sixteen years, and at school.

Milton's visit brought him into contact with a different class. He was introduced by Lord Scudamore, or by his letters from home, to Grotius, then ambassador from Queen Christina of Sweden, whose strange career is told so romantically by Nathaniel Hawthorne in his "True Stories," and to

whom Milton in later years sent a complimentary verse in Latin, composed in the name of Cromwell. Grotius is hardly less interesting than the strange sovereign he represented; he for learning and independence, she for eccentricity and ability. Hugo Groot was his native name (Grotius being a Latinizing of the Dutch original), and he was born in Delft sixty-five years before. In youth famous for Latin tragedies and poems, Grotius was in middle life imprisoned for his opinions, escaped after two years by the help of his wife, returned to Holland in 1631, and then went to Sweden whence he was sent to Paris as ambassador, two years before Milton's coming. The two men no doubt had much in common, though there were thirty-four years between their ages; and Grotius may have conversed with Milton upon a favorite project for uniting the Protestant churches of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and England; at all events he gave Milton letters to English merchants on his route.

## *Visit to the Continent*

Milton did not stay long in Paris, being eager to reach Italy. He went southeast to Nice and there embarked for Genoa, and after making brief visits to Leghorn and Pisa, at length reached Florence.

The long friendship and intimacy with Diodati explains Milton's greater interest in Italy as compared with France, and he tells us that Florence especially was by him "particularly esteemed for the elegance of its dialect, its genius, and its taste." Two months were spent in Florence, and were passed in "intimacy with many persons of rank and learning." Milton enjoyed the literary societies and meetings then fashionable, remarking that they tend to the "diffusion of knowledge and the preservation of friendship."

The men mentioned by him are those prominent in these circles and noted for their interest in the sort of learning then popular in Italy—the study of language and the discussion of the principles of literary composition, for it was a time of criti-

## *In the Days of Milton*

cism and discussion rather than production, and its scholars were men of learning rather than of wisdom or genius. Indeed, Milton quotes the Italians themselves as saying "nothing had been there written these many years but flattery and fustian."

Of most interest to us are Milton's meetings in Italy with the great Galileo and with Manso, an Italian gentleman to whom Milton afterward addressed a long Latin poem. The visit to Galileo especially touches the imagination. Born in the same year as Shakespeare, Galileo after a long life as philosopher and teacher, was now living in exile from his native city under sentence by the Inquisition, because of his heretical views in holding that the earth moved around the sun when the Scriptures plainly set forth the contrary.

Landor in his "Imaginary Conversations" has written for us a supposed account of Milton's meeting with the old philosopher, who had become blind the year before this visit; and in his poem "Italy" the poet

## *Visit to the Continent*

Rogers has also given some beautiful lines to a description of the same incident:

Rogers' lines to Arcetri are these:

"Nearer we hail  
Thy sunny slope, Arcetri, sung of old  
For its green wine; dearer to me, to most,  
As dwelt on by that great Astronomer,  
Seven years a prisoner at the city gate,  
Let in but in his grave-clothes. . . . .

There, unseen,  
In manly beauty Milton stood before him,  
Gazing with reverent awe—Milton, his guest,  
Just then come forth, all life and enterprise;  
*He* in his old age and extremity  
Blind, at noon-day exploring with his staff.

Little then  
Did Galileo think whom he received:  
That in his hand he held the hand of one  
Who could requite him—who would spread his name  
O'er lands and seas—great as himself, nay, greater;  
Milton as little that in him he saw,  
As in a glass, what he himself should be,  
Destined so soon to fall on evil days  
And evil tongues—so soon, alas, to live  
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round  
And solitude."

But there is no other record of the facts than Milton's own in his "Areopagitica,"—"There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old a prisoner to the Inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought," and the famous references in "Paradise Lost" (i-287) to the shield of Satan hanging on his shoulders—"like the moon whose orb through optic glass the Tuscan artist views at evening, from the top of Fesolé," and (v-262) "as when the glass of Galileo observes imagined lands and regions in the moon."

There are in Florence two localities where this visit may have taken place. Galileo's house in the city, and his Tower, on a hill six or seven hundred feet above the Arno river. Both have been preserved as memorials of the astronomer and contain relics of him, such as his microscope and astronomical instruments, a portrait and an autograph letter; and a visitor to

## *Visit to the Continent*

Florence may find many features of the locality unchanged since Milton's visit, over two and a half centuries ago.

A letter written from Florence by Milton to an Italian friend who was writing a Tuscan grammar, is dated September 10, 1638, and fixes the first certain date in his journey; so we know that his visit to Galileo was in the autumn and a few days after the birth of Louis XIV of France.

Richard Garnett, in his "Life of Milton," says: "The Italy of Milton's day, its superstition and its scepticism . . . its monks and bravos, its processions and its pantomimes . . . the opulence of its past and the impotence of its present, will be found depicted by sympathetic genius in the second volume of *John Inglesant*."

Milton was greatly admired and praised by the Florentines, though the Englishman makes light of the work he exhibited to them, calling his compositions "some trifles which I had in memory composed at under twenty or thereabout; and other things

*In the Days of Milton*

which I had shifted, in scarcity of books and conveniences, to patch up among them."

## CHAPTER VIII

### END OF HIS FOREIGN JOURNEY

FROM Florence, by way of Siena, Milton continued his journey to Rome, arriving probably in the fall, about in October, 1638, when the danger from the Roman fever—that is, as modern science has proved, from the mosquitoes of the Campagna—was over. In Rome Milton says that he “spent about two months in viewing the antiquities of the renowned city,” and “experienced the most friendly attentions from Lucas Holsten and other learned and ingenious men.” But we are able to expand this brief sentence by other evidence from his writings. We know that he was at a great concert given by Cardinal Barberini, nephew of the pope, who “himself waiting at the doors, and seeking me

## *In the Days of Milton*

out in so great a crowd, nay, almost laying hold of me by the hand, admitted me within in a truly most honorable manner." A singer, Leonora Baroni, greatly impressed him, or at least gave him subjects for three Latin poems wherein she is extravagantly praised, but rather in the vein of poetry-making than in that of an admirer. Lucas Holsten was librarian of the Vatican, and we know of his attentions to the poet by a letter expressing gratitude.

But Milton has little to say anywhere of the antiquities of the Imperial City; indeed, much that now makes the old city so absorbingly interesting to modern travelers was in his day yet awaiting the work of "that greatest archæologist, the spade." The old forum was buried deep, and cows were pastured upon the ground that covered the ancient market-place.

It is difficult to explain Milton's silence on the subject of the memorials of ancient Rome except by the shortness of his stay there; one would certainly expect from so

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

great, so sensitive and so learned a poet some fruit of his Roman visit besides epigrams to a concert-singer, to a second-rate poet, and a letter to an attentive German librarian. Even in his poetical works there is said by Garnett to be but one reference to "the venerable ruins and masterpieces . . . that have inspired so many immortal compositions." And that reference (Book iv, *Paradise Regained*, 31-85) is but a general vision of the grandeur of Rome under her emperors, hardly suggestive of any personal knowledge of the ancient city in his own times. He does not even mention the recent completion of St. Peter's, that wonder of architecture.

From Rome Milton set out for Naples, and was accompanied in his journey by a certain "recluse," or hermit, to whom the poet gives credit for introducing him to a distinguished Italian, Giovanni Battista Manso. This gentleman was then nearly eighty, and had always been a patron of art and literature, and a friend to all who

## *In the Days of Milton*

had distinguished themselves during his time. He had befriended Tasso, who had enshrined his name in his poems; Tasso's successor, Marini, also enjoyed Manso's protection and friendship. In the literary societies of Naples, Manso was honored and popular, and he welcomed Milton cordially. Milton records that Manso acted as his guide, entertained him and visited the traveler at the inn where he lodged.

All these attentions prove that there was something attractive in the young English tourist. Indeed, Manso tells Milton in a parting poem that the only change needed to make him "Angelic instead of Anglic" was in his creed, for Manso was a devout believer in the Roman Church and could regard Milton only as a heretic. Two presentation cups from Manso were carried away as keepsakes, and are described in Milton's Latin epitaph on his friend Diodati.

But although Diodati was dead in August, 1638, Milton could not know of his

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

loss for some months, and no doubt was looking forward to telling his friend the incidents of his sojourn in Italy, when he should once more be at home again in England.

It had been the traveler's intention to extend his journeying into Sicily and Greece, but he tells us that "the melancholy intelligence which I received of the civil commotions in England made me alter my purpose; for I thought it base to be traveling for amusement abroad while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home."

Undoubtedly the news that summoned him home was the story of Charles' expedition into Scotland for the purpose of forcing the Scotch churches to accept the service-book, to acknowledge the rule of the bishops, to allow the king to control the vesting of the clergy. The Scotch had covenanted to resist to the end "to the utmost of that power which God has put into our hands all the days of our life," and to defend their rights, Scottish veterans

## *In the Days of Milton*

trained in the service of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden came across the seas and were enrolled under General Leslie. "Dugald Dalgetty" in Scott's "Legend of Montrose" is a typical veteran of the sort, though he gave his allegiance to the royalists, like a true mercenary as he was.

King Charles gathered 20,000 men at the city of York; but the Scotch eagerly accepted his challenge, seizing Edinburgh, Dunbarton, Stirling and Aberdeen, and preparing to march to the border. The two armies met only to negotiate, and King Charles decided that it was wise to yield something of his demands. He had only raw recruits to combat General Leslie's veterans, and not having dared to call an English Parliament together, he supported his soldiers out of voluntary gifts from his sympathizers.

There was no fighting, and Charles signed the Treaty of Berwick promising to leave all questions to an assembly and Parliament—a treaty that was never kept.

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

Then his unpaid army melted away—"like boys let out of school."

Such was the first war-cloud, slight, but presaging the great storm.

Meanwhile, giving up his trip, Milton turned back toward Rome, though warned that the English Jesuits there had laid plots against him because, in disregard of the advice of Sir Henry Wotton, Milton had refused to keep "secret thoughts and an open countenance," never hesitating to express his view on religious matters when questioned, though never being the first to begin a conversation on the subject. "I took no steps," he writes, "to conceal either my person or my character; and for about the space of two months I again openly defended, as I had done before, the reformed religion in the very metropolis of popery."

Again he stayed two months in Florence, being warmly welcomed, and then by way of Bologna and Ferrara, visited Venice. From Venice he shipped home the books he had bought abroad (which suggests that we

## *In the Days of Milton*

may picture him as loitering now and then in the book-shops of the cities he had visited), and may have learned of the failure of King Charles' campaign against Leslie; for instead of hastening home by sea he goes north through Verona and Milan and along Lake Leman to Geneva.

Here he held "daily conferences with John Diodati, the learned professor of theology," uncle of his friend Charles; and this old professor may have told Milton of the death of the nephew. Leaving Geneva he retraced his route through France and arrived in England in July or August, 1639, having been absent about fifteen months. It is characteristic of the man that, in answer to certain libelous statements made against him in later life by his enemies, he thus concludes his own brief account of his foreign journey:

"The mention of this city [Geneva] brings to my recollection the slandering More, and makes me again call the Deity to witness that in all the places in which

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

vice meets with so little discouragement, and is practised with so little shame, I never once deviated from the paths of integrity and virtue, and perpetually reflected that though my conduct might escape the notice of men, it could not elude the inspection of God."

Either during the later days of his trip or upon returning to England Milton learned that he had lost his friend Diodati, whose burial is registered, together with that of his sister, in the parish of St. Anne, Blackfriars, London—both victims of some epidemic. The poet expressed his grief in a Latin lament, "*Epitaphium Damonis*," a poem that resembles "*Lycidas*" in form and motive, and yet breathes a personal sorrow greater than the author could have felt for Edward King.

As Professor Masson says in his introduction to the poem, "It is purely the accident of its being in Latin that has prevented it from being as well known as '*Lycidas*,' and that has transferred to Edward King

## *In the Days of Milton*

the honor of being remembered and spoken of as the pre-eminent friend of Milton's youth and early manhood. Not the Irish-born Edward King, but the half-Italian Charles Diodati was Milton's dearest, most intimate, most peculiar friend."

No one familiar with Milton's works need be told this. Diodati's name comes up repeatedly, and until his death put an end to the friendship, we can trace the course of Diodati's life in the references to him by his friend in the First and Fifth Elegies, in two of the familiar Letters and this superb Epitaph, while in regard to Edward King we have only "Lycidas" as part of a volume contributed to by other students of Cambridge.

From these monuments of his friendship we read many facts that help us to round out the poet's own life; and this epitaph contains a few lines proving that at this time he thought of writing an epic upon the early history of Britain, and meant to write hereafter more exclusively in English than

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

he might, if neglected abroad, be better known at home. But Milton was dissatisfied with the subject when he had studied deeply into it, and he says, "As to Arthur, more renowned in songs and romances than in true stories, who he was and whether any such reigned in Britain, has been doubted heretofore, and may again with good reason." We shall soon see him weighing other subjects for his pen, while his daily life is as unpoetic as possible.

He did not return to the village home at Horton, where the young lawyer Christopher remained with his wife, but decided to find lodgings in London. He chose his home in what was then St. Bride's Church-yard, at the house of a tailor, a small place chosen because it was quiet, and not far from the neighborhood familiar to him in his boyhood. Here he undertook the education of his nephews—the Phillips boys. Their mother, a widow since 1631, had married a man named Agar, and so her sons by Phillips were taken in charge by

## *In the Days of Milton*

their uncle, and taught by him, the youngest being practically adopted.

This beginning soon grew into more than private tutoring, for finding the house too small, Milton moved to another in Aldersgate street, again selecting a house with a garden around it, and opened a regular school, where instruction was given on a plan of his own—one criticised most interestingly in Dr. Johnson's life of the poet.

Milton's idea is explained in his letter on "Education" addressed to "Master Hartlib," wherein are set forth the plan of an ideal school for about one hundred and twenty scholars, with regulations for studies, exercise, and diet. In general, Milton sees no reason why the reading of classic authors should not convey to pupils some of the principles of science and the arts. He says, incidentally, "And either now or before this they may have easily learned at any odd hour the Italian tongue!" But it will hardly do to smile at Milton as a linguist, for he certainly acquired an un-

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

usual readiness in so many languages that one of his Florentine friends speaks of him as familiar with Spanish, French, Italian, Greek, and Latin, and to these must be added some knowledge of Hebrew, at least.

In exercise the youth of this model school are to receive a military training, to make excursions for sightseeing on land and at sea, partly with a view of learning which of them had special aptitudes. This letter on education was dated 1644, some four years after the return from Europe, and was no doubt the result of his experience as a teacher.

Dr. Johnson finds amusement in Milton's resolution to hasten home and its outcome —the opening of a boys' school; but Browne in the Clarendon edition of Milton, contrasts the conduct of the poet with that of Evelyn, the diarist, who determined to absent himself from the ill-face of things at home; and quotes De Quincey's opinion that Milton made a sacrifice of his pleasure-trip, but no promise that bound him to any

## *In the Days of Milton*

course of conduct. Later we shall see that there was no cowardice in Milton's decision to fight with goose-quill rather with sword or musket, but simply the choice of that weapon wherewith he considered he could render most effective service for liberty.

About once a month, we are told, the schoolmaster would take a brief holiday with some young men of his acquaintance, "the chief of whom were Mr. Alphry and Mr. Miller, two gentlemen of Gray's Inn . . . beaux of those times, but nothing near so bad as those of nowadays," as his nephew Phillips wrote.

On the 13th of April, 1640, assembled a Parliament, only to be dissolved in three weeks, having voiced the people's complaints and voted no supplies. Evelyn tells how he "went to London to see the solemnity of his Majesty's riding through the city in state to the Short Parliament . . . a very glorious and magnificent sight, the king circled with his royal diadem, and the affections of his people." But this, the first

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

Parliament in eleven years, did nothing to show any affection to the king, leaving him still bankrupt.

Then the Earl of Strafford, Thomas Wentworth, who had raised men and money in Ireland, came into England and, taking command of the royal army, advanced against the Scots. They, August 20, crossed into England, occupied Newcastle, and sent to King Charles asking him to consider their grievances, summon a Parliament, and settle a permanent peace. Strafford's troops were a disorderly mob, and when the Scots made ready to attack York, where Charles was, he bought them off by paying their army during negotiations, and left English territory in their possession as a pledge of good faith.

The English would not support the war, and, as Green says, "penniless, without an army, with a people all but in revolt," the king "was driven to summon again the Houses to Westminster." And thus came the Long Parliament, whose sitting began

## *In the Days of Milton*

November 3, 1640, "a day," Evelyn writes, "never to be mentioned without a curse."

During these months of political turmoil we learn from his own words that the poet had not yet determined to give up his literary plans, but resumed his intermittent studies, "cheerfully leaving the event of public affairs, first to God, and then to those to whom the people had committed that task." His home was near one of the four old gates in London wall, but in 1617 King James' entry into London by Aldersgate had been commemorated by a new structure decorated by effigies of the king and of the prophets Samuel and Jeremiah. Open fields were just beyond, and Howell says the district reminded him of an Italian city. Diodati's father and Milton's old teacher, Dr. Gill, lived not far away, which may have influenced the choice of this home.

Either here or in the St. Bride residence —the locality of which is now that of part of the "Punch" office—Milton made up a

## *End of the Foreign Journey*

list of his projects for poetical works, ninety-nine, of which sixty-one are Scriptural, and four of these relating to "Paradise Lost." Among the historical subjects are the story of Macbeth and Alfred the Great. The thought of writing tragedies seems uppermost, but his purpose, whatever the theme, was to teach.

All such dreams, however, were laid aside when war broke out, and signs multiplied that the great storm was at hand. May 9th, 1640, a placard on the Royal Exchange called upon the people to assemble and plunder the palace of Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and that night a riotous crowd led by the club-bearing apprentices made the attack, but were repulsed and the ringleaders executed. Later, an attack was made upon the house of the Spanish ambassador because English papists worshipped in his chapel; but this also was controlled by the lord mayor before violence was carried far. The army of the king, as it marched northward,

## *In the Days of Milton*

broke into churches, tore down chancel-rails, moved the communion-tables into the body of the church, and otherwise showed themselves in favor of the doctrines for which the Scotch army was ready to fight. With disaffected, untrained soldiers the king had no chance of success, and he was compelled to make terms with the Covenanters for lack of support at home.

Among the first acts of the Long Parliament was the impeachment of Strafford on the proposal of Pym, and his imprisonment in the Tower. Laud, also, was imprisoned, while others of the king's advisers took flight. The king himself dared not oppose Parliament lest they should refuse to vote money to pay the Scots, and thus to keep them at peace. Consequently the House of Commons controlled the kingdom. Strafford was executed, and one by one the powers of the crown were stripped from King Charles, and the personal government of the Stuarts came to an end.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE WRITER OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS PAMPHLETS

WE have seen Milton a student, a poet, and a traveler abroad, and must now for a while think of him as teacher of his two nephews and of certain other young pupils, the sons of his friends, in the school in his garden-house outside the walls of London, and far enough from Westminster and the King's palace to be not quite involved in the bubbling and boiling political and religious eruption that had brought Archbishop Laud to the Tower and Strafford to the block. Both of these events were enough to show the temper of the King's subjects; for in the beginning of a revolution only could such men have been reached and punished.

## *In the Days of Milton*

The histories of the time give us many pictures of the turbulent scenes in London. Thus the death of Strafford was hailed by joyful shoutings, bonfires, ringing of bells, and those who had come to the city to witness the execution rode back crying aloud the good news to the towns through which they passed homeward.

No doubt Milton followed all these happenings with the interest of a scholar and the emotions of a patriot, but he took no active part in any of the struggles between King and Parliament which made memorable the year 1641, and which gradually stripped the throne of all power. While the parliament was sending out commissioners to remove and deface all the images and ornaments in churches; providing that its sessions should be held every three years at least, and not dissolved without at least fifty days' sitting; trying and attainting Strafford and Laud; abolishing or regulating the King's courts; and seeking to settle religious differences—Milton was teaching

## *Political and Religious Pamphlets*

his pupils quietly in his little school, and taking no part in politics.

It was only when the King's partisans issued pamphlets meant to control public opinion that Milton took part in the great strife. "I declined," he writes, "the toils and dangers of war for no reason but that I might, with much more effect and not less danger to myself, assist my countrymen in another way, and show a spirit neither dejected by misfortune, nor more than justly apprehensive of calumny, or even of death. As from a child I had been devoted to the more liberal studies, and was always stronger in intellect than in body, declining the labors of the camp, in which any robust common soldier would easily have surpassed me, I betook myself to those weapons with which I could do most execution, that by bringing into action, not the inferior, but if I were wise, the better and more efficient part of my nature, I might do the utmost in my power for my country and her excellent cause."

## *In the Days of Milton*

In May, 1641, appeared the first of Milton's political pamphlets—"Of Reformation Touching Church Discipline in England"—a little book arguing against prelacy as a foe to reformation and liberty, and citing authorities from the earliest times. Milton's object was "to help the Puritan ministers who were inferior to the bishops in learning." This pamphlet was privately printed, no doubt at his own cost, and put on sale at booksellers' shops to be picked up by any customer interested. There was no advertising, no attempt to make a market or derive a profit from its circulation. It resembled an editorial or an argumentative magazine article put forth to influence public opinion, and depended for its success entirely upon the interest it might excite.

Two other pamphlets upon the question of church government were published in the same year, both answering similar works by Bishops Hall and Usher, learned advocates of the prelacy. None of these arguments need notice here since they give us no as-

## *Political and Religious Pamphlets*

sistance in comprehending the life of the time, except as indications of the method of controversy and bitterness of feeling between the opponents. These appeared in the early summer, while King Charles was coquetting with first one party and then another, trying to obtain support against the fierce attacks of the Parliamentary leaders. They led Milton, however, to ally himself more directly with the church reformers, for he soon joined the Puritan ministers in answering the bishops' attacks upon the action of Parliament. Bishop Hall's first "Humble Remonstrance" had been answered by five Presbyterian divines, signing themselves by a name made up of their initials—"Smectymnuus." The "ty" in this name stood for Thomas Young, formerly Milton's tutor. Then Archbishop Usher answered these men, and Hall published a defence of his Remonstrance. Milton came to the rescue of the five divines, in his "Animadversions Upon the Remonstrant's Defence," and when a son of Bishop Hall

## *In the Days of Milton*

responded by a pamphlet abusing Milton, the poet replied, closing the discussion. But this was not until 1642.

In Milton's final "Confutation" we find the passage often quoted expressing the poet's good will toward Cambridge, and his assertion that the authorities of his college would have been glad to keep him among them. We also find Milton's account of his life in London at this time—early rising, the morning's exercise, reading of good authors, and generally a life of purity and high endeavor. But the pamphlet, though it contains some beautiful passages, has also much modern taste finds low and undignified—mere vulgar abuse, only to be excused, if at all, by the plea that men wrote so in those days, and must write in such terms to be forcible.

This was published in July, just before King Charles made his hurried journey to Edinburgh for the sake of seeking allies among the Scotch lords, with John Hampden dogging his steps in order that the Par-

liament might know what their unreliable monarch was about. They could not trust him, for he had been in this same year detected in a plot to take Strafford from the Tower by force, and in other conspiracies as unworthy of the throne.

It was these attempts to use force that made the Parliament insist upon having command of the military. There was no standing army, but each county had annual training seasons when the citizens were marshaled into the "trained bands"—such as "John Gilpin" captained. These militiamen were the backbone of England's fighting force, and upon their inclining to King or Parliament hung the whole settlement of the quarrel. These forces were under the command of the Lord Lieutenants of the counties, and Parliament was now demanding that the King should transfer the appointment of these militia generals to the legislative body. "On which point," Carlyle writes in his life of Cromwell, "as his Majesty would not yield a jot, his Parlia-

## *In the Days of Milton*

ment and he ultimately rent themselves asunder, and drew swords to decide it."

In November, not long before the King's return from the north, there broke out an Irish rebellion that meant to the English an uprising of Romanists against Protestants. It was accompanied by the massacre of thousands—some say 40,000, others 200,000—by the most atrocious cruelties, and the horror excited in England was turned into hostility to King Charles because it was given out that the rebels had acted under warrant from him.

True or not, this was believed by many, and after the longest and stormiest debate ever known in Parliament, when only Hampden's tact avoided bloodshed among the sword-wearing members, it was decided to present to the King a Grand Remonstrance. This was on Monday, November 22, and the next Thursday saw the King's return from Scotland, and his entertainment by the city of London.

Parliament was no longer unanimous

against the King, for many thought enough had been done to limit his power, and feared lest the reformers should go too far. To reawaken distrust, the Remonstrance was prepared, recounting the grievances against the royal party; and the King's partisans asserted that it was no more than a mischief-making political move. At all events, the move was successful, for in and out of Parliament quarrels arose, mobs were formed, and during the street-fighting arose the nicknames "Cavaliers" and "Roundheads." The King's party included most of the nobles, the clergy, the country gentlemen; while the merchants, citizens, and small farmers were for the Parliament.

In the slang of the day, the "Cavaliers" were soldiers of fortune, such as Scott's "Dugald Dalgetty," who had learned their trade in the religious wars on the Continent; the "Roundheads" were the London apprentices with their close-cropped hair and round caps. As the mobs that swarmed about the streets were largely made up of

these two classes, the names soon came to distinguish the factions.

Such were the mobs who, aroused by the cry of "Popery!" mobbed the bishops in the streets and at length frightened them from attending the sessions of the House of Lords. Then the bishops protested that the laws passed in their absence were illegal, and for this were impeached by Parliament and sent to the Tower. The King thereupon decided to deliver a counter-stroke, and made the attempt to seize the "Five Members," taking with him to Westminster a large force of the "Cavaliers," only to find "the birds flown," and to drive all Parliament to take refuge among their partisans in the city of London "to be safe from armed violence."

All these acts of violence on both sides were not performed without the gathering of mobs, sword cuts and cudgel-blows, outcries, and threatenings; though we have no hint to decide whether John Milton was present in any of the historic scenes. Such

was the London of 1641 and January, 1642, until the departure of the King on the tenth from Whitehall Palace—abandoning London as hopelessly hostile to his cause. The next day saw the triumphant re-entry of the Five Members, escorted by the armed citizens, “the trained bands of London and Southwark on foot and the watermen on the river.” Dickens, in his “Child’s History of England,” gives an excellent impression of the scene.

There was now no doubt that war was inevitable, and both sides prepared for it. King Charles’s last concession was signing the bill excluding bishops from the House of Lords, and he absolutely refused to sign another bill that would have put the militia under the control of Parliament. Fearing that he might be seized, Charles left for the city of York, having already sent the Queen abroad from Dover to sell the crown jewels for money to pay his war expenses.

Meanwhile nothing is heard from Milton until the appearance, in January, 1642,

of the first pamphlet bearing his name—“The Reason of Church Government Urged Against Prelaty, by Mr. John Milton.” This is interesting especially because it sets forth the author’s reasons for entering the field of controversy—a field in which he says he feels his weakness, “having the use but of my left hand.” The final pamphlet in the “Smectymnuus” debate appeared later than the one named above; but it has already been referred to in order that the whole subject might be kept better together. Henry Morley, excusing Milton’s adoption of the tone of his opponents, says: “Controversy then was simply a strong wrestle with the single desire in each wrestler to secure the fall of his opponent. So Milton wrestled, and gave many a rough hug with his intellectual arm; but he sought only the triumph of his cause by strife of mind with mind; his antagonist opposed to him argument rough as his own with coarse abuse.” Surely the abuse was coarse enough on both sides, considering that the dispute

## *Political and Religious Pamphlets*

related to religious matters and was carried on by educated men.

Two events of 1641 should be noted—the birth of a son to Milton's brother Christopher, in August, and the closing of all the theatres in London early in September. In the artistic world, a change in the style of portrait-painting may be dated from about this time, for 1641 was the year of the death of Van Dyck and also of the coming to London of Peter Lely, the first an exponent of dignified art, the other essentially a fashionable painter.

The first six months of 1642 saw both sides preparing for the conflict, getting together men and munitions. Both tried to seize the important arsenals and magazines—Hull, Portsmouth and the Tower of London being the chief prizes—and all being secured by the Parliament forces. Hull refused to admit King Charles, and then the royalist members withdrew from Parliament and joined the King at York, partly with the purpose of dissuading him from

## *In the Days of Milton*

war. Thus there were two headquarters formed, and recruiting began. Charles received gifts from the nobility and the universities, and the proceeds of the jewels sold abroad by his Queen; the Parliament opened a public subscription in London to which women gave even wedding-rings.

At last King Charles advanced to Nottingham and raised the royal standard and a red flag to declare war and invite adherents. This was on August 22, 1642, a "stormy and tempestuous day," for the standard was blown down; and three days later the royalists took Lincoln. Then the King fell back toward the northwest, where more of his partisans were, making his headquarters at Shrewsbury, and gaining many adherents, while Essex, the Parliamentary general, was gathering his forces at Northampton. Charles having moved westward, Essex went also west to Worcester, still barring the way to London; and when Charles marched southward, the two armies came first into collision at Edgehill,

## *Political and Religious Pamphlets*

though the first bloodshed was at Powick Bridge, where the King's nephew, Prince Rupert, had won a small cavalry skirmish near Worcester.

Edgehill was fought not far from Stratford-on-Avon, on Sunday, October 23, and was the "Bull Run" of this civil war. The King had about 18,000 and Essex 15,000 men, and the meeting was unexpected. The line of battle was formed, and King Charles rode along the lines in armor covered by a black velvet mantle. At three o'clock the Parliamentary artillery from the right flank began firing, and were answered, King Charles firing the first piece with his own hands. Charges of horsemen followed, and Prince Rupert routed those opposed to him, and a part of the Parliamentary force deserted to the King. While Rupert was pillaging baggage-wagons, the rest of the royalists were driven back and the royal standard captured. The army of Essex had won the field, but King Charles secured the road to London, and taking Banbury,

## *In the Days of Milton*

was able to continue his march toward the capital.

The royal standard, it is said, was retaken by a clever trick. One of the royalist captains put on an orange scarf (Essex's colors and the Parliament badge), and riding into the enemy's lines demanded the flag from Essex's secretary, saying, "It were shame that so honorable a trophy should be borne by a penman." When it was handed over, the Cavalier galloped away with it, and was knighted for the exploit.

Another remarkable incident was the presence of Dr. William Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, and the King's physician, who absent-mindedly sat down on the grass and read a book until the whistling bullets reminded him he was not in his study, whereupon he remembered he was in charge of the young princes, Charles and James, and withdrew them to a safe distance. The two boys were twelve and nine years of age.

## *Political and Religious Pamphlets*

It is believed that Rupert's success convinced Cromwell that he must have trained cavalrymen to resist the Cavaliers, for not long afterward he tells John Hampden that "they never would get on with a set of poor tapsters and town-apprentice people fighting against men of honor. To cope with men of honor, they must have men of religion."

And this conviction was the most important result of the fight at Edgehill.

## CHAPTER X

### IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE WAR

**I**N reading of these battles we must remember the difference between the equipment of soldiers then and now. Firearms were still bulky and clumsy, requiring a fork as a rest, and had little range or accuracy. They were fired by means of a slow match. Yet they were effective enough to have caused an abandonment of much of the armor meant for close fighting, only the back and breast-plates and an iron helm being retained by the soldiery. A long buff coat of leather and calf-leather boots were additional protection, the coats being dyed so as to give regiments a sort of uniform.

Officers added shoulder-pieces, arm-pieces, and tassets upon their thighs, and

## *In Early Years of the War*

they, like the cavalrymen, wore feather plumes in their hats, and richly embroidered coats.

To resist charges there were pikemen, carrying long poles headed with metal points, for the bayonet was not yet invented, and the loading of the musket took so long that the musketeers needed some protection between their volleys. The battle-line consisted often of eight or ten ranks, and after firing, the front rank retired to load, leaving the second to deliver the next volley. The firearms and cannon did not do much damage, the chief loss being suffered when the forces came to close quarters—or “push of pike,” as it was called. Thus it was that the superior bravery of the Cavaliers was of overwhelming advantage until the less experienced Roundheads had become taught by adversity to fight with the same resolution.

After Edgehill, King Charles captured the neighboring towns, Banbury, Abingdon, and Henley, without resistance, and the

## *In the Days of Milton*

Royalist cavalry began to plunder the country near London.

Londoners were much troubled by the King's advance, and the House of Commons even petitioned the King for peace. He replied with his usual array of fine words, and made them an offer to talk over terms, and meanwhile advanced through a mist, and attacked a small garrison that were holding Brentford for the Parliament, in order to control the road to London. Brentford was but a few miles from the very gates of the city, some six miles from Hyde Park, and hardly a dozen from Milton's school for young gentlemen at Aldersgate.

The King's forces were nearest on November 12, 1642, and London began to prepare for an immediate attack. Houses were barred, chains put across the narrow streets to check cavalry, and barricades begun; the city's forces were gathered, and speeches made. Two days after the Brentford skirmish 24,000 men were reviewed

## *In Early Years of the War*

on Turnham Green, between the Cavaliers and London.

This display of force daunted even the headstrong Rupert, and the Royalists marched away to Oxford to go into winter quarters.

During the dismay in London, Milton wrote a sonnet, originally entitled "On His Door, When the City Expected an Assault," but afterward "When the Assault Was Intended to the City." One can hardly take it in earnest nor be quite satisfied to consider it humorous. The sonnet asks protection and promises fame to the enemy who guards the poet from harm, bidding him remember how Alexander of Macedon (Emathia) spared Pindar's house in Thebes, and how a song from the Electra of Euripides saved Athens from destruction. Certainly the sonnet must have been written in a playful spirit, since Milton could hardly have been known to the Cavaliers except as the author of bitter political or religious pamphlets. The thought be-

hind the lines was a “conceit” in the old sense, not in the new.

So for a time the clash of arms was stilled, not again to come so near Milton’s home. That he was never indifferent to the troubles war brought upon the people may be argued from the record of a large subscription made by him for the relief of those who had been made homeless by the Irish rebellion; no doubt he was as ready to aid those nearer home, though we have no record of him until about the middle of 1643, and must before passing into that year note a few happenings of 1642.

To all England the war was of overweening importance; yet to us there were other events of the year far more noteworthy. Of all, the most momentous was the birth of a little son to Harriet, wife of Isaac Newton, a farmer who had died a short time before the boy was born. This little fellow afterward became Sir Isaac Newton, and lived until the time of George I, dying at eighty-five years of age. Per-

haps we shall better realize that the times of the poet Milton are not far in the past if we consider how few lives will take us back to this birthday of Sir Isaac Newton, December 25, 1642 (O.S.). Newton lived till 1727, when Benjamin Franklin was just of age, twenty-one, and establishing a printing office in Philadelphia; Franklin died in 1790, when Wordsworth was twenty, and Wordsworth lived till 1850, when the poet Swinburne was a boy of thirteen, and Swinburne still writes, being not yet seventy. Newton, Franklin, Wordsworth, Swinburne—less than four men's lives take us back to that school-keeping of Milton's.

In this same year when Newton was born, Galileo died. It was as if the great Englishman came to carry on the work of the Italian astronomer. Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici" and Hobbes's "De Cive" and "Leviathan" were being written—all three works showing the speculative cast of mind so general at the time;

and Jeremy Taylor, during the King's stay at Oxford, wrote "Episcopacy Asserted," showing how a good man and true could maintain the opposite side of the questions Milton discussed so strongly. Other events worth remembering are the death of Cardinal Richelieu, and the discovery, toward the end of the year, by Tasman, the Dutch Captain, of "Van Diemen's Land," now Tasmania, nicknamed "The land of lots of time." But the discovery for many years remained only a discovery.

An excellent history of the war describes the situation during the next few months as one of "desultory warfare," saying "towns, castles, houses, were fortified, garrisoned and besieged." Only where one party was in a great majority was there peace. Thus in the east, where the woolen industry flourished, the Roundheads were soon organized so completely by Colonel Cromwell that all signs of Royalist activity ended. Cromwell had soon come to the front. He was now forty-three, having been born nine years be-

fore Milton, and of far better social rank. He was cousin to John Hampden, and had lived the life of a country gentleman at Huntington, quietly tilling his lands (certainly not a “brewer”) and caring for his family. He was in sympathy with the Puritans, but cuts no figure in public affairs until he appears as a member of the third Parliament called by Charles in 1628. The session lasted a year, and Carlyle says that this Parliament was “most gentle, soft-spoken, cautious, reverential; and in substance most resolute and valiant,” since it spoke out boldly to the King and openly attacked his favorite, the Duke of Buckingham.

Cromwell’s first speech was in February, 1628-9, when he referred to the preaching of “flat popery at Paul’s Cross” and protested vigorously; being ordered by Parliament to bring his witness—Cromwell’s old teacher at Huntingdon. Soon after there was the celebrated scene where the Speaker of the House was held down in his chair

## *In the Days of Milton*

while resolutions were passed condemning heresies and illegal taxation; and then the members fled for fear of the soldiery—and there was no more Parliament for eleven years, or until the Long Parliament of 1640. Again to quote Carlyle, “A studious imagination may sufficiently construct Cromwell’s equitable life in those years. Diligent grass farming, mowing, milking, cattle-marketing . . . . prayer, religious reading and meditation; household epochs, joys and cares:—we have a solid, substantial, inoffensive farmer of St. Ives hoping to walk with integrity and humble, devout diligence through this world.” And as was Cromwell, so were the other country gentlemen who were in a few more years to rise in arms against their headstrong King.

Cromwell was in the Long Parliament of 1640, and he begins to attract attention for his “ordinary apparel” made by “an ill country tailor,” his face “swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervor.” Similar

## *In Early Years of the War*

stories are told with less authority, but they give us an idea of the force and uncouthness of the coming general.

But we see little more of Oliver until swords have been drawn, except that he is on record as offering several hundreds of pounds to aid in the equipment of forces against the King. Then he raises two companies of volunteers, and in August, 1642, seizes the silver plate of the University of Cambridge, adding £20,000 to the Parliament's resources. As Carlyle puts it, "the like was going on in all shires of England; wherever the Parliament had a zealous member it sent him down to his shire in those critical months to take what management he could."

Next Cromwell is captain of a troop of horse, and takes part in the Edgehill battle, after which he is in the eastern counties near Cambridge looking sharply to the interests of the Roundhead party, and on the defensive against ravaging Royalists, at the head of some 12,000 Parliament volunteers

collected from five associated counties. He is now Colonel Cromwell, and holds fast seven counties for the cause he has undertaken, showing us how the Parliament set about the winning of the nation.

While Cromwell was heart and soul engaged in the war, Milton was going a-courting. At Forest Hill, near Oxford, lived Richard Powell, who had for years been paying interest on a loan of £500 made to him probably by the poet's father. In May, 1643, John Milton departed from London without telling his errand, and about a month later returned with Mary Powell, Richard's daughter, whom he had married while absent. She was seventeen, her husband thirty-four. She, like all her family, was a Royalist, and Milton had married in a region then in the hands of the King's troops, which indicates that he was not prominent enough to be considered an important enemy by the upholders of the King.

The Powell family included eleven chil-

dren, she being the third, and the eldest daughter. It was a merry household, and one apparently well to do. With the bride came some of her friends to the Aldersgate house, and there was feasting for some days in entertainment of the visitors. But when the school-day routine was taken up, the young wife found it "very solitary" and gloomy. Milton's was a serious, preoccupied nature, and though a very few of his poems show that he had now and then had some romantic imaginings, he certainly knew nothing of womankind, and was not likely to understand that the most serious courtship should come after marriage.

It is not strange, therefore, that the little Mistress Milton after a month's honeymoon longed for the "company, merriment and dancing" of her country home and begged to make a visit of a few months, promising to return about Michaelmas. Milton consented—not understanding that he ought to have gone with her!—and away she went in July, 1643, or earlier—

## *In the Days of Milton.*

to be seen no more in London for several years.

On Michaelmas, September 29th, she certainly had not returned; and it seems that before this Milton had written letters that remained unanswered, and at last sent messengers, who had been plainly told that his wife refused to come back; for the pamphlet on “Divorce” which the experience drew from Milton is dated August 1, and preceded Michaelmas unless written in 1644, which some older editors assert without sufficient evidence, such as is cited by those of later times.

It has been said that the early publication of the “Doctrine of Divorce” shows hasty action and too quick judgment; but Milton was accustomed to speculate upon all questions of law and liberty. It is hardly likely that he reached thirty-four without opinions on the subject of marriage, though he only set them forth when his own experience had enforced his convictions. Certainly, while he shocked his own age, he is nearer

## *In Early Years of the War.*

the modern views upon the whole question than were the men of his time, though the subject can not be yet looked upon as settled in all civilized legal systems. But we have to do now with the views and happenings of his own time, and must remember that Milton appealed only to "the infallible rules of Scripture" as his guide, saying in a later pamphlet on the subject: "For God, it seems, intended to prove me, whether I durst alone take up a rightful cause against a world of disesteem, and found I durst."

We may contrast these brave words with Dr. Johnson's prejudiced comment: "Being one of those who could easily find arguments to justify inclination he published (in 1644)" the pamphlet on divorce. But Dr. Johnson had not with Milton that sympathy which is the first qualification for the biographer. Boswell says: "That a man who venerated the Church and Monarchy as Johnson did should speak with a just abhorrence of Milton as a politician, or,

## *In the Days of Milton*

rather, as a daring foe to good polity, was surely to be expected," but he points out how warmly Johnson appreciates the excellence of Milton's poetry.

Among the disasters resulting from the inaction of Essex during this time was the fatal wounding of John Hampden in a skirmish. He died on June 24, 1643, and his death was followed by a number of defeats in the north and west of England, where ten towns were taken by the Cavaliers before the autumn, Bristol, then second in size in the kingdom, being captured by Prince Rupert and given over to plunder.

The Parliament voted to seek terms, and were only prevented by a great mob of citizens who came to protest, led by the mayor and councilors. Another mob came two days later, five thousand women demanding peace, and were only dispersed by a charge of cavalry, seven or eight women being killed.

The war during 1643 and 1644 had been

## *In Early Years of the War.*

a struggle to take and to protect London. King Charles had three main bodies in the field. He was northward of the capital; his general, Hopton, was in Cornwall, westward, and the Earl of Newcastle was also in the north, in Yorkshire. Charles hoped to combine in an attack all three armies, Hopton and Newcastle being assigned to hold both banks of the Thames below London, while the King made his assault. The supplies of London came by the Thames, and the river being controlled, the city must soon yield.

So desperate was the Roundhead cause that Charles determined to march on London, knowing that Essex had lost so many men by sickness and desertion that he could offer no effective resistance.

But it was first necessary to conquer the Roundheads in the north and west, so that the King's armies might be free to march elsewhere. Therefore King Charles decided first to besiege Gloucester—the only important post still holding out for the Par-

## *In the Days of Milton*

liament in the west—and then return to the conquest of London.

“Much hung,” say the historians, “on the resolution of this garrison of 1,500 men . . . . If they yielded Charles would turn at once upon the disheartened and defenseless capital. If they resisted, Parliament would obtain a breathing time in which to recruit its forces.”

They held out, even the women and children working on the forts, and toward the end of August came Essex with 14,000 men, including some of the London trained bands, saving the town. Then both armies moved toward the capital, and King Charles succeeded in seizing the town of Newbury, barring the road to London, and being between the Parliamentarians and their supplies.

Thus Gloucester in the west, and Hull in the north, had held out so long that they had kept Newcastle from marching southward to the King’s aid.

After failing to take Gloucester, Charles

## *In Early Years of the War*

hurried to Newbury, putting his army between Essex and London. Then Essex was forced to fight his way through or abandon London; besides, the army of Essex were in the open fields and could not remain cut off from supplies.

This led to the first battle of Newbury, September 20, 1643.

The Cavaliers had the best position, and despising their enemy, insisted upon charging, some of the officers flinging off their armor in bravado. But the hedges broke up the cavalry, and Essex closing up his London train-bands advanced, driving the King's infantry before them.

After six hours' desperate fighting, the stubborn bravery of the Londoners won the field, and the Royalists retired to Newbury, leaving the road open to the capital.

At nightfall the battle had ended, Essex holding the hill where the Cavaliers had been, and in the morning he was able to pass Newbury and take the roads to Reading and London, not much troubled by at-

## *In the Days of Milton*

tacks from Prince Rupert's cavalry in the rear.

The Cavaliers lost many officers that day, including Falkland, who was respected by both sides, and the Londoners had proved their valor.

Reading had been taken by the Parliamentary forces in the previous fall, and now it was permanently in their hands.

Their first capture of Reading had directly affected Milton's life, for to that town a year or two before had gone John Milton, the elder, and Christopher—both Royalists—from Horton. And by the coming of the Roundhead army they had been driven out, and had gone to live with the poet, some few months before the battle of Newbury.

## CHAPTER XI

### MILTON'S DAYS OF TEACHING

WITHOUT the slightest warrant in fact, many biographers of Milton have tried to show how dull a place his house must have been for the lively little Cavalier bride, Mary Powell, and have excused her desertion of her husband on the ground that she found the Milton household very different from her own lively home. They represent Milton as cold and repellent, having in mind his scholarly prose and forgetting his poetry.

Macaulay, however, says: "Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the peace of summer fruits,

## *In the Days of Milton*

and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the oriental harem and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside."

If we are to judge the man from his writings, and on this question of his marriage we have no other guide, it must be admitted that there is no reason for regarding Milton as a neglectful husband or an unloving man. That in his wife's desertion of him he should compose a treatise on divorce was natural to the times and to the thoughtful nature of the man. It was a time for questioning and debate on all questions in which the church was involved, and of these marriage was one of the most prominent. There was the more reason for his pamphlet in the meeting of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, a body of the Presbyterian clergy called together to settle church government and discipline for the kingdom.

## *Days of Teaching*

After the departure of Mistress Milton, the routine of household and school went on as before until the coming of Milton's father to live with him.

Though the battle of Newbury had saved London, the King's cause was still so strong that the Parliamentary leaders laid aside their differences, and resolved to call upon the Scotch army to aid them, though this required the acceptance of Presbyterianism. It was not long after the battle that both houses of Parliament swore to a solemn league and covenant with Scotland, to reform the religion of England "according to the example of the best reformed churches, *and according to the Word of God*," the last clause being added by Sir Henry Vane; and Scotland prepared an army to help against the King.

Meanwhile Newcastle's siege of Hull went on until an army under the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell arrived from the Five Counties southward, and in a half-hour's battle near Winceby—where

Cromwell was unhorsed and almost slain, but remounted a trooper's horse—put the Royalists to flight and pursued them five miles through marshy ground. Next day the siege of Hull was abandoned, October 12, 1643.

These two battles were especially important as showing that the Parliamentary forces, whether horse or foot, need not fear to encounter equal numbers of the enemy, and as proving that Cromwell's psalm-singing troopers were most excellent cavalrymen. But though these greater fights must be the ones described by historians at most length, because of their importance on the general issue, there were minor engagements taking place throughout the land. As an example of these the sieges of Basing House, which lasted from August, 1643, to October, 1645, should be known through the pages of contemporary writers in order that one may appreciate the obstinacy and bitterness with which the great struggle was carried on.

## *Days of Teaching.*

About the time that Essex retired toward London, and King Charles toward Oxford, Milton was sending messages to beg his wife to return, and only desisted when told plainly that he need not expect her. It may be, as it is asserted, that her family believed the royal cause was sure to triumph, and wished to separate her from one identified with the Roundheads.

Certainly there were many discouragements for the Parliament, in spite of the failure of the King's general plan for taking London. The battles had seemed to show that the Cavaliers were nearly invincible; Bristol had been taken and plundered by Prince Rupert, and it was in importance the second city of the kingdom; John Hampden, considered the most promising leader of the Parliamentary forces, had been killed in a skirmish; Essex, the Parliament's general-in-chief, seemed to lack energy to follow up his successes; and the Royalists could claim that the year's campaign had at least cost them no great losses,

## *In the Days of Milton*

even if they had scored no marked advance—but they failed to reflect that they were teaching their enemy to beat them.

During the next half year there was little to change the general situation, but much to injure the cause of the King in the minds of his subjects. The Cavaliers and Roundheads alike were becoming embittered by the war, and there were cruelties to prisoners on both sides. As animosity increased, chances of peace became lessened, and the Royalists were sure to lose more adherents as the war went on, for they were fighting the cause of the privileged few against the many, and every day would make this clearer.

“London,” says a historian, “was quite changed from the time when a gay court was held at Whitehall, when Laud lived at Lambeth, when Cavaliers daily visited the artillery gardens, when crowds frequented the theatres. The grass was already growing in the courts of Whitehall, Lambeth Palace was deserted and was soon to be

## *Days of Teaching*

used as a prison. In the artillery-gardens, once so gay, grave citizens now learned the use of the pike and the musket; the theatres were all closed." In April, 1644, the old Globe Theatre, the home of Shakespeare's dramas, was pulled down to make room for tenements.

The Puritans were in full control. They were destroying images and ornaments, and burning the "relics of Catholic superstition" —and showing no discretion in the process. Sundays were strictly kept, gambling and drunkenness had ceased, openly at least, and street noises were replaced by the sound of praying or psalm-singing from the services held in the houses. Even the crying of wares on Sunday was forbidden, and the "Book of Sports" had been publicly burned. News of victories or reverses came in printed sheets that were widely circulated, and were followed by solemn fasts.

John Milton, in his home at Aldersgate, seems to have been busy with his teaching and writing. It was during this time that

he wrote his essay on "Education," already spoken of; and a few other minor pieces may have been written during the year, though the only work of importance that appeared was his article on "Divorce," in a signed edition. Two sonnets, the one beginning "Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth," and that "To the Lady Margaret Ley," show that he was not entirely without feminine society. The subject of the first is not known. Lady Margaret was the wife of a Captain Hobson, and lived in London. Milton's nephew Phillips says, "He made it his chief diversion now and then of an evening to visit the Lady Margaret Ley," and describes her as a woman of wit and ingenuity, and her husband as an accomplished gentleman. Milton's compliment to her is certainly charming, and, simple though the subject may be, the sonnet does not seem unworthy of its fellows—which Macaulay describes as "simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet."

## *Days of Teaching*

In the middle of 1644 comes the battle of Marston Moor, when, after several minor engagements near Oxford, the Parliament's army was attacked by Prince Rupert and forced to accept battle near the city of York. There were more than 20,000 on each side, the largest armies that had yet met. Cannonading began, and the Parliament men sang psalms, expecting Rupert to open the fight. But it grew late without his moving, and at length about seven o'clock (still light in that latitude and season) the Roundheads were ordered forward, Cromwell being opposite Prince Rupert.

For the first time the "invincible" Cavalier horsemen met Cromwell's "Ironsides," and after a brief struggle the King's men were routed, the whole right wing giving way. The precise opposite took place on the other end of the line, the Parliament soldiers being driven back. But Cromwell stopped after a short pursuit and, turning back upon the Royalists, who supposed the

## *In the Days of Milton*

battle won, put them to rout so effectually that the cause of the King was lost in the northern counties.

But this great success was to be followed by almost as great a failure, for Essex had marched westward into Cornwall, where he had been surrounded and his army captured. Both these battles brought disgrace to the Presbyterian element and honor to the Independents, of whom Cromwell was looked upon as leader. The second battle of Newbury, October 27, 1644, where the Earl of Manchester was in command, also had the same effect, for Cromwell went before the House of Commons to complain that Manchester prosecuted the war feebly, and was to blame that the King escaped capture. To sum up the war for the year, it may be said to have shown that the only hope for a lasting peace was in defeating the King rather than in trying to make treaties with him, and that Cromwell and Fairfax were the generals to whom England must look for decisive results.

## *Days of Teaching*

Meanwhile Milton was fighting the same battle as Cromwell, the battle for liberty of action unhampered by those who feared to go too far. The man of letters had been attacked from the pulpit and by pamphleteers because of his views on divorce; and as Cromwell went before Parliament to justify himself, so had Milton done a few months before, being summoned by the Stationers' Company for issuing his unlicensed writings on Divorce. In both cases no action was taken by Parliament because the Independents were growing so rapidly in favor with the public.

But in each case the bringing up of the question had far-reaching consequences, for two great men, Milton and Cromwell, were aroused to action.

Milton, though he could in his own day score no victory greater than to escape condemnation for ignoring the laws for licensing his publications, took his pen in hand to do battle for the great cause of a free press for all time. About the middle of

1644 a new master of the Stationers' Company showed himself to be zealous by attempting to call Milton to account for the unlicensed publication of the Divorce tracts, contrary to an ordinance of June, 1643. The case was referred to a committee, with the usual result of oblivion. But Milton, apostle of liberty in the church, in the state, and in the home, saw an opportunity to strike a blow for liberty of speech.

On November 24, 1644, came out another unlicensed pamphlet, the famous "Areopagitica : a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing."

The very name of this pamphlet was a reminder to Parliament of the old Athenian Court on the Mount of Ares, where the God of Battle was made to stand trial, and Milton reminds them also that one able citizen of Athens was able by a letter to make her legislators amend their form of government. But in order to show why this argument is even to-day held to be a treasure of English literature and palla-

## *Days of Teaching*

dium of civil liberty, let us quote from Mr. C. E. Vaughan's able essay that accompanies the "Areopagitica" in the Temple Classics. Milton, he says, argues—

"To see God through the world of truth and beauty that he has made, to search the world without ceasing for the gradual unfolding of his purpose, that is the whole duty of man; and with less than the whole he ought not to be content."

And this was the poet's creed. This it was that inspired all his controversial writings. Hence, says Mr. Vaughan,

"The 'Areopagitica' is an imperishable monument to the nobility of Milton's personal creed. It is an uncompromising plea for the rights of reason and of progress. But it is no less memorable because it blends the intellectual keenness of the Renaissance with the religious ardor of the Reformers and the Puritans, and so interprets the whole spiritual life of the age that begins with *Tamburlaine* and the *Faerie Queene*, and ends with *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*."

Cromwell's appearance before the House was soon followed by the celebrated "Self-

## *In the Days of Milton.*

Denying Ordinance" that ousted the luke-warm generals, putting Fairfax, Cromwell and Skippon in command. Then it was resolved to remodel the army, which was reduced in number, put upon a business-like pay-system, and thoroughly disciplined after Cromwell's methods.

And even the briefest chronicle of the times must not omit to mention the execution of Archbishop Laud, in January, 1645, almost the last act of Parliament in which Presbyterians and Independents found it possible to agree.

During the early part of 1645, Milton brought out stronger and better supported arguments on the divorce question, and is said to have contemplated marriage with a Miss Davis, "a very handsome and witty gentlewoman." But meanwhile came the battle of Naseby, June 14, and the repetition of the tactics of Marston Moor. Again Cromwell drove half the King's men before him, returning to rout the other victorious half, and again part of the Cavaliers

## *Days of Teaching*

carried their successful charge too far and left their comrades to be defeated. Five thousand Royalist prisoners were taken, and all their artillery and baggage—including the King's private letters, which brought to light all his insincerity and double dealing. This was virtually the end of the Cavaliers' cause, and after a few more struggles and some successes by Montrose in Scotland, the whole Royalist defence collapsed, and Charles surrendered himself to the Scotch army, by whom he was conveyed to Newcastle.

Before the final disaster, and either because of the failing fortunes of the King or because of Milton's open courtship of another, Mary Powell had decided to return to her husband. One day while the poet was visiting "a kinsman named Blackborough," Mary Powell came before him and fell on her knees, begging forgiveness.

This scene is compared by Milton's biographers to Dalila's visit to Samson in "Samson Agonistes," and to Eve's begging for

## *In the Days of Milton*

giveness of Adam in Book X. of "Paradise Lost"; but except that in all three cases a wife is begging forgiveness, there is no real parallel among them, nor any reason for thinking Milton had his own experience in mind in writing either passage.

At all events, the wife was reconciled, and about September, 1645, went to her husband, who had then removed to a new home that is known as the Barbican House, a large dwelling, for not only did his wife come to him, but brought with her a number of her family to share the hospitality of the Puritan home. Where this house stood is now no trace of it, but Professor Masson, the poet's biographer, saw it, describing it as "a commodious enough house in the old fashion." The windows were of thick glass set in a lozenged frame of lead, also in the old fashion. The building was destroyed in 1864 to make place for a railway or its office. The name Barbican, still retained by the street in London, came from the tower that long ago stood here just outside

## *Days of Teaching*

the walls of the city, and in Milton's time the site was suburban, with fields not too far away to please a poet's eye.

During the last few months of this year, 1645, the Parliamentary forces were busy retaking Bristol and other strongholds where Royalists still held out, among others Basing House, which finally was stormed by Cromwell and entirely destroyed.

Two events of this time that interested Milton are the death of Grotius, who had received him so kindly in Paris, and that of Manso, his hospitable Italian friend. Of the latter, especially, Milton must have been reminded when he was preparing the first edition of his poems for publication. This was done at the earnest request of the publisher, Humphrey Moseley, who won honor for himself by urging that the poems should be collected. "Let the event guide itself which way it will," said he, "I shall deserve of the age by bringing forth into the light as true a birth as the Muses have brought forth since our famous Spenser

## *In the Days of Milton*

wrote." Here is the true spirit of publishing, without which the calling loses all its claim to rank above any money-making trade. But the small 200-page octavo did not appear until January 2, 1646 (N.S.), and consequently its appearance should belong among the events of that year.

## CHAPTER XII

### TO THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR

THE edition of Milton's poems was a small octavo of over two hundred pages, eighty-eight of which were the Latin verses with a separate title-page. All his known poems were included except that "On a Fair Infant" and the "Vacation Exercise," and the publisher wrote a preface—really an advertisement. There was an ugly portrait prefixed, and Milton gave the engraver certain Greek lines to put below. Apparently the artist knew no Greek, for, translated, the lines were these:

"Some prentice hand this effigy did trace!"  
You'd cry at once, seeing my living face:  
My friends, you do not know it's I at all—  
Laugh at the clumsy artist's blundering scrawl!

## *In the Days of Milton*

This practical joke played on the engraver ought to convince any reader that Milton was not the dry-as-dust, priggish scholar many ignorantly believe him, but that he enjoyed a bit of humor thoroughly.

The title-page says: "The Songs were set in Musick by Mr. Henry Lawes, gentleman of the King's Chappel, and one of his Majesties private Musick," showing that Lawes's friendship with Milton still lasted in spite of the "unpleasantness" between Royalists and Roundheads, and also that the composer's name was believed to have weight with the buyers. The exciting public events that followed undoubtedly prevented any very great demand for works of purely literary value, for there was no other issue of this volume for nearly thirty years.

During the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 1645, King Charles had been trying through the Duke of Ormonde to make such terms with the Irish as would bring him an army of 10,000 men, and in Scotland the Marquis of Montrose had brought his Highlanders

## *To End of the Civil War*

into the field, while the followers of Argyle were in England. The Irish and Scotch were considered by many of the English as savage marauders, and their employment embittered the King's enemies still further, and lessened the chances of any reconciliation. In fact, after the battle of Naseby all minor disputes or differences of opinion began to be put aside, and men took sides in what Green describes as "the struggle between political tradition and political progress, religious conformity and religious freedom." It was this that made it possible for King Charles and his adherents to influence events even after all uprisings in his favor had been put down. Though Montrose was defeated at Philiphaugh, and the English Royalists overcome by Fairfax and Cromwell, until only a few fortified castles were still holding out, King Charles still hoped that he might make good terms.

The Scotch army and the Presbyterians in Parliament were not in sympathy with

## *In the Days of Milton*

the Independents, and Charles intrigued with all parties to gain time, promising toleration to one and religious uniformity to the other side; hence, when his armies were overcome, he surrendered to the Scots, hoping they would support him because of his blood and because they had been disappointed that the terms of the Covenant were not enforced in England.

On May 5, 1646, Charles rode into the Scotch camp, and was taken to the city of Newcastle; and on June 20th his old stronghold, Oxford, surrendered, bringing ruin to the Powell family, some of whom were then living with Milton in the Barbican house. Their estate at Forest Hill, four miles out of town, was taken possession of by a friend under kindly pretence of being their creditor, but their mansion was occupied by Roundheads and their movables sold. Apparently this sent all the Powells into London for refuge, where they were hospitably received, though Milton had no great fondness for their company. Gar-

## *To End of the Civil War*

nett quotes from Milton's letter to his friend Dati an apparent reference to the Powells as "the persons who sit daily in my company, weary me—nay, by Heaven—almost plague me to death whenever they are jointly in the humor for it." One may guess that table-talk on politics, wherein John Milton held his own against all the fugitive Royalists, may explain this outburst, for few things are more wearisome to a wise man than being baited to argue daily against unreasoning prejudices and fixed sentiments.

On July 29, 1646, Mrs. Milton bore a daughter, who was baptized Anne, after Mrs. Powell. Though welcomed, no doubt, the presence of an infant could not have made the household better adapted to the continuance of Milton's literary labors, and it is not strange that there is not much writing to credit to this year. He may have written the sonnets referring to the "Detraction Which Followed on My Writing Certain Treatises," and the one "On

the New Forcers of Conscience." All are bitterly abusive and sarcastic, and contain lines often quoted: "New *Presbyter* is but old *Priest* writ large," "License they mean, when they cry *Liberty*," and "That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp" are phrases still current.

Another sonnet, that to Henry Lawes, ranks Milton with those poets who believe English verse to be regulated by "just note and accent" rather than by the long and short syllables of classic scansion; this piece of verse first appeared in 1648, but the original draft, preserved at Cambridge, is dated February 9, 1645 (N.S., 1646).

During 1646 was published Dr. Thomas Browne's "Vulgar Errors"—a proof that men of science, even in those distracting times found time for learning; the same author's "Religio Medici," published two years before, had made him celebrated. So far as the war was concerned he "was as indifferent as if he had belonged in another planet"; but he is comparable with

## *To End of the Civil War*

Milton for "richness of imagery and majestic pomp of diction," and is one of the literary figures of the age, proving that the style of even so independent a writer and thinker was due somewhat to the influence surrounding him—the metaphysical discussions, and the spread of learning.

The air was full of speculations; John Morley, in his "Life of Cromwell," quotes a saying that hardly a day passed without the brewing or broaching of a new opinion.—"If any man have lost his religion, let him repair to London, and I'll warrant him he shall find it," says one satirist of 1646. "I had almost said, too, that if any man has a religion, let him come but hither now, and he shall go near to lose it." But the Westminster Assembly were in control, and in the autumn abolished episcopacy and ordered church lands sold for the public use. Still, the Independents were strong in the sword of Cromwell and the pen of Milton, and the New Model Army, originally made up of the ablest men among the Round-

heads, and increased by those whom certainty of pay had attracted at a time when civil employments were few, was the most united party then in the kingdom, and the surest to prevail.

We need not set out the negotiations with King Charles. It is enough to know that Charles would not establish Presbyterianism permanently, and that Parliament secured the royal prisoner from the Scots, paying £400,000 toward the expenses of the army, whereupon the Scotch, in January, 1647, withdrew from England, to be taunted for years afterward by the popular gibe:

“Traitor Scot!  
Sold his King for a groat!”

in which we must pronounce the name, “Scote” in order to preserve the rhyme. But in preserving the rhyme, let us not be unjust to the Scotch. They could hardly do otherwise than surrender the King to the English Parliament. Their work in England was done; they could not take Charles

## *To End of the Civil War*

to Edinburgh unless he swore to the Covenant, and they could not remain away from home. The Parliament was the only authority in England likely to favor Charles, and the money had nothing to do with the case in any way.

A few events of 1646 may be noted briefly that we may not forget the world outside of the civil war. In this year Leibnitz was born, and George Fox founded the denomination of Friends—the Quakers. Across the Atlantic there had been Indian troubles in Virginia, and between the French and the Five Nations; Maryland, after internal disorders, reinstated Lord Baltimore; the Massachusetts General Court repudiated the authority of the English Parliament, and John Eliot began his missions to the Indians. The Roundheads and Royalists were at loggerheads even in the colonies, but no long continued outbreak took place.

The civil war was at an end for the time, and so long as the English army was domi-

## *In the Days of Milton*

nant Milton had no reason to fear persecution for his opinions on religion, marriage or freedom of speech.

By order of Parliament Charles was sent to Holmby, in Northamptonshire, where he remained till June. London wanted peace, Parliament was Presbyterian, the army Independent, each distrusting the other, each wishing to be in control. The Army asked for overdue pay, and laws to protect them for their acts during the war, and the Parliament blamed them as troublers of the state. Cromwell for some time played the part of go-between, distrusted by both.

The household of Milton meanwhile suffered within three months the loss of Richard Powell and John Milton, father-in-law and father of the poet. By the death of Powell, whose affairs were left in confusion, Milton lost the money due him as marriage-portion, £1,000; by that of his father he seems to have inherited something, for about this time he is believed to have given up teaching. The absence of

pupils and of the Powell family enabled Milton to remove to a smaller house in High Holborn, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, though not now identified. Mead's "Milton's England" says: "The new home was among pleasant gardens, and near the bowling-green and lounging-place for lawyers and citizens." The fields back and to southward of Milton's new home were "frequented from an early period by wrestlers, bowlers, cripples, beggars, and idle boys." In an old play a drunken fellow draws his sword against a crowd of teasing boys, saying, "I will make a generation of young cripples to succeed in Lincoln's Inn Fields!" and other references show that the locality was not considered safe at night —though that is true of almost any unlighted locality in those days before police were known.

Among those who had frequented the bowling-green was Lilly, who afterward became noted as an astrologer, being consulted even by King Charles himself. He

## *In the Days of Milton*

had been a servant at a house near by, and spent "his idle hours in bowling with Wat the Cobbler, Dick the Blacksmith, and such like companions."

Of Milton's life at this time Garnett quotes the poet's own account: "No one ever saw me asking anything among my friends or stationed at the doors of the Court with a petitioner's face. I kept myself almost entirely at home, managing on my own resources, though they were often in great part kept from me, and contriving though burdened with taxes—in the main rather oppressive—to lead my frugal life." He wrote nothing to aid in settling the religious disputes then so active, and busied himself with the beginning of a History of England, a Latin treatise on Divinity, and collecting material for a Latin dictionary—occupations hardly more connected with the needs of the time than were the speculations of Dr. Thomas Browne upon the question of "Urn Burial." Merely in order to pass on to other topics, it may be said that the

## *To End of the Civil War*

History was never completed, the materials for the lexicon were afterward used by one of his nephews, and the religious treatise came out over twenty-five years later.

Dr. Garnett is inclined to blame Milton for failing to become "the apostle of toleration in England as Roger Williams was in America," adding that we are in danger of forgetting that "he was, in the ordinary sense of that much-abused term, no Puritan, but a most free and independent thinker, the vast sweep of whose thought happened to coincide for a while with narrow orbit of so-called Puritanism."

Finely expressed as this is, it may occur to the reader that the times in England were not such that even Milton's pen could have pointed a shorter way to toleration than Cromwell's sword. In the middle of 1647 action outran argument. Fearing that the Parliament and King might agree against the Independents, some one—possibly Cromwell—sent Cornet Joyce and five hundred troopers to Holmby House,

## *In the Days of Milton*

and on the 5th of July the King was invited to accompany the cornet. Charles asked for his commission, and Joyce exhibited his troopers. "As well written a commission, and with as fine a frontispiece, as I have ever seen in my life," was the King's witty reply; but Joyce also was a man of ready tongue, for upon the King's stipulating that they should "exact nothing that offends my conscience or my honor," the Independent officer retorted: "It is not our maxim to constrain the conscience of anyone, still less that of our King"—and the cavalcade set out.

Newmarket was their destination, for the army was at Saffron Walden, between that town and London, and on the way they stopped at Cambridge, where Cromwell, Fairfax and other officers held an interview with the prisoner, disclaiming the responsibility for his seizure; but at Newmarket in custody of the army the king remained, without pretence of legal warrant.

Then began the confusion of authorities

## *To End of the Civil War*

—eleven members having been expelled by the army, in June, a London mob drove out the Independent members in turn, and then the Speakers of the Houses having put themselves under protection of the army, Cromwell and Fairfax marched to London and took possession of Westminster and the Tower, on August 7, 1647. It was soon after this march that Milton's removal to High Holborn was made.

The rest of 1647 was taken up in renewed attempts to come to an understanding, but Cromwell and Charles met as an irresistible and immovable body, and the two set conscience against conscience, neither yielding a jot—which made progress impossible. The army, too, made itself heard with propositions to set up what was really a republic, and only after a great public prayer-meeting could even the Independents find toleration for each other's views of the proper course to be followed to establish a stable government.

But the King helped to solve their per-

## *In the Days of Milton*

plexities by fleeing away from London (whither he had been brought from Newmarket) and taking refuge in Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight—which ended negotiations with him.

Then came a mutinous spirit in the army, suppressed by Cromwell's personal influence and bravery, he arresting fourteen ring-leaders, condemning three, and causing one to be executed; but soon it came to be known that Charles had made another treaty with the Scots, and measures were taken to insure that the King should not escape from Carisbrooke. So ended 1647, a most exciting year for all the dwellers in London Town, and not at all favorable to literary pursuits by quiet Mr. Milton in his house at Holborn.

In a copy of Milton's published poems, a first edition, belonging to the British Museum, Henry Morley discovered on the back of page 87 a manuscript poem entitled "An Epitaph." It seemed to be signed with the initials "J. M." and the

date "10 ber. 1647," but the J is doubtful, being obscured by the Museum stamp. In Morley's collection of poems of the time, "Kings and Commons," he prints these lines, gives a facsimile of the original, and argues strongly for their genuineness. Most of the authorities are said to have decided against the piece; but apart from the poem itself, it would seem that the circumstances of its discovery argue strongly in its favor.

The copy in which the poem appears comes from what is known as the "King's Library," a collection made by George III., and the stamp coming *over* the initial J. proves that the poem was there when the volume came to the British Museum. To believe the lines written by someone whose initials resembled J. M., in December, 1647, is difficult. To believe a forgery was introduced before the book was in possession of the Museum, assumes that a most aimless piece of literary rascality was committed many years before the discovery of

the lines by Henry Morley's accidental examination.

Every student of Milton will be interested by the lines, and many will believe, with me, that they are genuine—or at least so likely to be genuine that they should not be excluded from the complete collections of his verse, even if they be marked as doubtful. Two of the words of the poem, *Heaven* and *itself*, occur in an inscription written by Milton in 1639 in an autograph album afterward owned by Charles Sumner, and the facsimiles of these words, which I have compared, have remarkable resemblances.

In speaking of the England of Milton's time we must beware of giving to it the characteristics of the empire we know. The whole population was only about five and a half millions, of whom a half million lived in London; while to-day thirty-three millions of people are in England and Wales; and London, "Greater London," includes six millions and a half—more than

## *To End of the Civil War*

the whole country included in the middle of the seventeenth century. Manchester had only one-hundredth of its present numbers, or about 6,000 in all; and the villages of to-day are not unlike the towns of Milton's time, so far as trade and activity are concerned.

The most valuable export was wool, English wool being celebrated then as now; tin and lead also were sent abroad in quantities in exchange for silk, cotton, indigo and spices. Fishing was a most important industry, and the choice fishing-grounds were eagerly claimed. Once at sea there was little regard for any law but that of the strongest, and piracy if successful was little condemned.

No American reader needs to be reminded that this was the era of colonizing, except during the actual Civil War, nor that, while English merchants hoped for gold and spices, the colonists could send home only timber, grain, tobacco, and fish. As trade was controlled by monopolies and

## *In the Days of Milton*

privileges, many were enriched, and until Puritan manners prevailed there was much money expended upon lavish costumes, or, by those of more cultivation, upon books, pictures, curiosities, or their scientific pursuits.

The dissolute courtiers were of another stamp, and wasted the revenues of their estates in orgies such as are described in Taine's "English Literature"—vulgar gluttony, stupid horseplay, or shameless profligacy—and led their snobbish imitators into ruinous extravagance. Even King Charles had little influence in restraining the vices of his favorites, though he did not practice them himself. Of course there were well-behaved gentlemen in all the parties, but the general tone of all society was coarser and more brutal, and there was little sympathy for suffering in man or animal. Superstitions of the most trivial sort were not uncommon among all classes, astrologers and fortune-tellers, witchcraft and amulets being believed in by men and

## *To End of the Civil War*

women of the highest standing. Superstitious matters figured in the trials of the high courts.

But at the same time there was much learning, a wide appreciation of the arts, and a home-life that was delightfully luxurious, among the higher classes; and the standard of comfort even among the merely well-to-do was much higher than it had been but a few generations earlier, under Queen Elizabeth. Commerce and trade had made the life of all classes fuller and wider, and there was a sturdy race of small-farming folk and tradesmen who became the backbone of the Roundhead armies under Cromwell.

The life of the time was no longer so different from our own that it can be readily characterized; to arrive at a proper idea of the times the easiest method is to subtract recent inventions from our own time, rather than to recount the improvements since the days of Good Queen Bess and William Shakespeare.

## CHAPTER XIII

### LAST DAYS OF ROYALTY

THESE years, when all England was in turmoil with a thousand and one unrecorded skirmishes, when it taxed the wisdom of all men prominent in public affairs to make even a guess at the outcome, were times of comparative quiet in the life of the Puritan poet. The only facts to record in regard to his work are the translating of certain Psalms and the writing of a few minor pieces, such as the sonnet to General Fairfax. As regards the Psalms, it was wittily said by Walter Savage Landor that "Milton was never so much a regicide as when he lifted up his hand against King David." Nor is this criticism too severe, though there is at least this excuse for the

## *Last Days of Royalty*

work: Apparently, Milton had not the slightest interest in it, but considered it a duty to provide the Church with new versions of the Psalms to take the place of those that were disused in the old English prayer-book. He might, if left free, have made the translations equal his other poetical work, but he considered himself bound to alter the Scriptural words and phrases as little as possible and to add to them the least number of words that would put them into English verse. As a result, he works like a schoolboy solving a puzzle, rather than as a poet.

The only other event besides the writing of these few pieces of verse is the birth of his second daughter in October, 1648, who was named for her mother, Mary Milton.

So far as public events go, there is a different story to tell. As John Morley says in his "Life of Oliver Cromwell," quoting Cromwell himself, the year was made memorable even in those stirring times by "many insurrections, invasions,

## *In the Days of Milton*

open and public attempts, all quashed in so short a time, and this by the very signal appearance of God himself."

King Charles was trying, while negotiating with the Parliament, to secure the aid of a Scotch army in return for his promise to establish Presbyterianism for three years. The covenant to this effect was secretly buried in the garden of Carisbrooke Castle, securely wrapped in a sheet of lead.

Disgusted with the failure to come to terms, the Parliament at length voted to make no more addresses to the King. The English people were at this time weary of the war, particularly of the heavy taxes needed to carry it on, and though they seemed mere turncoats, it is probable that many men were honest in their choice and desired to attain peace as quickly as possible by joining the stronger side.

General Fairfax was sent to suppress the Royalists in East England, and drove them into Colchester, which he besieged. Cromwell put down the malcontents in Wales,

## *Last Days of Royalty*

and then marched to meet the Scotch army, although he had but about nine thousand men against twenty-four thousand. Another revolt in Stamford was also quickly suppressed by the skilled Parliamentary forces.

It was Fairfax's siege of Colchester that led Milton to write his "Sonnet to the Lord General Fairfax." In this sonnet occurs a word which shows that there were still reminiscences of falconry in the public of Milton's time. The word "imp," which means to mend a hawk's broken wing by fitting on a new piece to the broken shaft, is one that would hardly present itself to a modern poet. The same word occurs in Shakespeare's "Richard II.," with the same sense.

In the "Life of Cromwell" before quoted, Morley speaks of the condition of the soldiers in Cromwell's army during their march to meet the invading Scotch: "Shoes and stockings were worn out, pay was many months in arrears, plunder was

sternly forbidden, and not a few of the gallant men tramped barefoot from Wales into Yorkshire. With fire in their hearts, the tattered veterans carried with them the issue of the whole long struggle and the destinies of three kingdoms. The fate of the King, the power of Parliament, the future of constitutions, laws and churches were known to hang upon the account which these few thousand men should be able to give of the invaders from over the northern border."

The enemies met at Preston, and then began a struggle that lasted three days, Cromwell being completely victorious, as, indeed, he always was, for he is one of the few commanders in history who never suffered defeat. The whole Scotch army was cut to pieces or put to flight, and thereafter Oliver Cromwell became a deciding factor in the politics of England. During his absence the Parliament had repealed their resolution not to communicate with the King, and had entered into proposals for

## *Last Days of Royalty*

a treaty with him at Newport, on the Isle of Wight. Clarendon, the Royalists' historian, in describing the King at this time, gives us some idea of his terrible suffering during these years of strife. "Though he had not seen the King," he writes, "for nearly two years, he found his countenance extremely altered. From the time that his own servants had been taken from him, he would never suffer his hair to be cut, nor cared to have new clothes. . . . His hair was all grey, which, making all others very sad, made it thought that he had sorrow in his countenance which appeared only by that shadow." The reader is at liberty to find a meaning in this last sentence if he can.

The vain attempt to make terms with the King lasted from the middle of September until the end of November, but when Cromwell was back in England and the army was once more free to exercise full influence, it was not long before the Parliament's negotiations came to a sharp con-

## *In the Days of Milton*

clusion. It is not known who took the step, but at daybreak on December 6th, a number of officers broke into the King's bedchamber and carried him off to Hurst Castle, "a desolate and narrow block-house on the Hampshire shore."

Meanwhile, having put the King beyond the reach of the Presbyterian leaders in Parliament, the army marched into London. And on the same day that saw the seizure of the King, Colonel Pryde, a trustworthy Independent, by military force proceeded to "purge" the Parliament of those members who were opposing the Independents and the army. Cromwell denied that this was done by his order, but admitted that he was glad of it, and "would maintain it." This Pryde's "purge" left only a small portion of the English Parliament, about one-fifth of the members, and these men who favored the army's supremacy. A week before the end of the year, the King was brought to Windsor, and after a solemn fast-day in London,

## *Last Days of Royalty*

December 27th, there began a discussion as to what should be done to prevent further mischief-making by the King. So ended the year.

Before proceeding to the next year, we will note a few events of the one just closing. On the 10th of August died Lord Herbert of Cherbury, a man well known to succeeding ages by his charming Autobiography, which has been called a "brilliant picture of the man and of contemporary manners—a masterpiece in its kind." He was a brother of George Herbert, author of "The Temple," "some of the purest pious verse in the language." Lord Herbert had been for a time a soldier in the King's army, but four years before his death had surrendered and was living in London. One interesting fact in the life of this writer, known as the first among theistical essayists, is his own account of his asking for a sign from a higher power, to encourage him to oppose the revealed religion. Whereupon he says that he was

## *In the Days of Milton*

“answered by a light yet gentle sign from Heaven.” Among all his writings, his Autobiography is undoubtedly the favorite, since it reveals an outspoken, earnest thinker and a nobleman of an intrepid, chivalrous disposition, though not lacking in self-esteem. During this year was published Herrick’s “Hesperides,” a book so well known to-day that no description of it is necessary. Of course, Herrick was one of the Royalist poets.

In domestic science, perhaps the most notable advance was the application of the pendulum to clocks, which was carried out by Christian Huygens after a suggestion originally made by Galileo. Huygens was a distinguished Dutchman, whose achievements in the field of applied and pure science are amazing. Before this time, clocks were regulated by a vibrating balance, instead of a swinging pendulum. The balance was on top, pushed by the escape-  
ment-wheel, and swung to and fro, releasing the teeth much as a pendulum now does.

## *Last Days of Royalty*

The greater accuracy of the pendulum would seem to come from the fact that it acts with less friction, and so is more apt to remain regular. It is also more easily adjustable.

We note in the briefest possible way that this year there were in Virginia two executions for witchcraft, and that the colony had grown to include twenty thousand inhabitants and a fleet of thirty-one merchant vessels. In France, the country was distracted by the Fronde War, and, indeed, during the most difficult periods of the Commonwealth it was fortunate that affairs on the Continent were in such condition as to absorb the attention of those foreign nations that might otherwise have been led to take part in the civil strife in England. Had it not been so, there might have been very serious complications, particularly as the English navy, like the population ashore, was greatly divided, and the King's adherents were nearly as numerous as those of the Parliament. Indeed, in this

## *In the Days of Milton*

very year, a mutiny occurred in the fleet that resulted in the secession of a large number of English vessels, which sailed away to The Hague, in Holland, where they put themselves into the hands of the Royalists.

As soon as the army of Independents were in control of affairs, and in possession of King Charles, they proceeded to put into effect their resolution to hold him answerable for the manifold disasters of the nation. For this purpose they desired to set up a court that would have some color of right, and to create a law under which he might be convicted. Both were easily made by a vote of the remainder of Parliament, and the consent of the House of Lords—of which but a dozen members were left—was voted to be unnecessary. Apparently a drum-head court-martial would have been the better proceeding, as being more frankly a war measure.

Algernon Sidney told the newly created “High Court of Justice,” “The King can

be tried by no court, and no man by this court," and refused to take part. General Fairfax, Skippon and Vane also withdrew; but the King was arraigned.

When the President, Bradshaw, a cousin of Cromwell, declared that the charge was high treason, "in the name of the people of England," a voice cried, "It's a lie!—not a tenth part of them. Oliver Cromwell is a traitor!" But when they sought to arrest the speaker, the voice was found to be that of Lady Fairfax, and she was not molested.

The King refused to plead, was of course condemned, and after a brief delay in which he bade farewell to his daughter and youngest son, he was executed, amid a ring of soldiery, upon a high scaffold in front of Whitehall.

The Londoners for the most part were not in sympathy with this action of the army; and instead of strengthening the Independents it sent many into the Royalist ranks, converting a grudging loyalty toward Charles the father into an enthu-

## *In the Days of Milton*

siastic support of Charles the son. Difficult to justify on any grounds, the execution of their prisoner seems a blunder of policy. Certainly, it roused the fear and hatred of all foreign monarchies, and gained no friends for the army at home. Perhaps the best that can be said in favor of those who put him to death is that they believed it would save bloodshed by hastening peace, that it had been their lives against his, and he had lost. That he bore himself with dignity on the scaffold is not surprising in a king and soldier, and it would have been remarkable if he *had* done anything “common or mean”—to quote Marvell’s lines.

Carlyle rightly says that “no modern reader can conceive the then atrocity, ferocity, unspeakability of this fact,” the slaying of “a monarch by divine right” under authority of the opposed right of the sword. But the mass of the army were religious fanatics who asked no authority for their acts beyond some text of scripture they interpreted to their need; and so, on

the day set, January 30, 1649, the King was put to death, and a piece removed from the political chessboard.

A week later a few friends buried him in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, in a vault where "a fellow of the town" said Henry VIII and Jane Seymour lay; for the chapel had been so dismantled that there was no clew to the places of the various tombs.

"The King is dead—long live the King!" is the rule in monarchism; and Charles the Second was at once proclaimed, in Holland at The Hague, by Ormonde in Ireland, and by the Scotch legislators; and a new hydra head confronted the Parliamentary leaders.

Within two weeks, probably laying aside the chapters of his history of England for the purpose, Milton had come to the aid of the regicides with his pamphlet, "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates," an argument to justify their course. Shortly put, Milton claimed the right of revolution

## *In the Days of Milton*

against tyranny, the right to withdraw the authority entrusted to rulers, and further the right to bring to justice for his crimes the ruler deposed. All this he supports by citations from the Bible and from history; but on the question of distinguishing a rebellion from a revolution he gives no help save the old notion that a rebellion is an unsuccessful revolution. The pamphlet leaves the question where it begins, and so must we, for it is insoluble. We can do no more than decide for ourselves whether the necessity of the case was great enough to override all law.

Within a month, Milton was asked to become "Secretary of Foreign Tongues" to the "Committee for Foreign Affairs," and on March 15, 1649, he appeared at Whitehall, accepting the office, at a salary of £288, equivalent to some \$4,500 a year. Soon afterward the new secretary removed to lodgings near where Charing Cross had stood till 1647.

For it was a time of demolishing what-

## *Last Days of Royalty*

ever might offend the ultra-Protestants, and Charing Cross, which had stood three and a half centuries, was among those “voted down” by Parliament in 1643, though it was left standing till four years later. There is a poem in “Percy’s Reliques” called “The Downfall of Charing Cross,” wherein some Royalist says:

“Methinks the Common Council should  
    Of it have taken pity,  
'Cause—good old Cross!—it always stood  
    So firmly to the City.  
Since crosses you so much disdain,  
    Faith, if I were as you,  
For fear the King should rule again  
    I'd pull down Tyburn, too!”

Such were the gentle compliments banded about amid the more serious disputes in the Kingdom. The current newspapers abused one another even in reporting the most important items of the war, as may be seen in the quotations made by Disraeli in his “Quarrels of Authors.” An amusing instance is the refusal of the Royalist

## *In the Days of Milton*

“Mercurius Aulicus,” published at Oxford by Sir John Birkenhead, to reply to a libel of the Puritan “Mercurius Brittanicus” until that paper could learn to spell its own name correctly. In its next issue the Puritan sheet took the hint and appeared as the “Britannicus.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

### MILTON AS THE COMMONWEALTH'S DEFENDER.

HERE seems to be among the biographers of Milton an almost universal regret that at a time when he was eager to give himself to poetical work, he should have accepted a place where he was no more than an interpreting mouthpiece for England's statesmen and politicians. But it may well be that Milton needed the money. He had given up his school, and if living upon his father's estate, it is more than likely that the revenues from this had been made uncertain by the war and its results. Certainly, in the one case about which we know, the debt owed him by the Powell family, we are aware that it was

## *In the Days of Milton*

no more than a few figures on paper from which he never realized a single penny. Although the salary was not much when compared with that of the real Secretary of State, Milton's superior in office, yet for a man who tells us that his tastes were simple, the income seems a very important matter. Besides, the employment brought him into close acquaintance with the men then in power and enabled him to aid, if only in a small way, the cause in which he sincerely believed.

During the few months following, besides writing letters that are of no importance to us, Milton produced at least one state paper, that helps us to know his opinions on affairs, although it is likely that the outline of it was furnished him. March 28th came out his "Observations on Ormonde's Peace." The Duke of Ormonde, Charles I.'s mouthpiece in Ireland, had granted the Irish home rule, and release from the oath of supremacy. The paper is interesting to us chiefly because it contains a glowing

eulogy of Oliver Cromwell and indicates the hearty sympathy with which Milton served the new government.

A much more important task soon came to the Secretary. Within a few days after the death of the King, there was published a book under the title "Eikon Basilike," the Greek words meaning royal image or portrait. This work had been prepared by Dr. John Gauden, and it had been submitted to King Charles while a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, and had received some corrections in his own handwriting. But the authorship of the book remained a secret until after the Restoration, and most people supposed that it was the work of the King himself. It professed to be the reflections of Charles during his imprisonment, and represented him in glowing colors as a martyr to his religious convictions and the victim of his misguided subjects. Mark Pattison, in his charming "Life of Milton," declares that "poet's imagination had never invented a theme

more calculated to touch the popular heart." The eikon was that of a "saint and martyr, a man of sorrows praying for his murderers, a king who renounced an earthly kingdom to gain a heavenly, who in return for his benefits received from an unthankful people a crown of thorns." Published when it was, the book's influence was enormous, its circulation extraordinary. Forty-seven editions were printed, fifty thousand copies being circulated, and its influence was felt wherever there was a glimmering spark of loyalty to the House of Stuart.

The book had appeared late in the summer, and the government decided that an answer must be promptly published. It is said that their first thought was to call upon John Selden, the foremost scholar in England, but their final decision fell upon Milton. Before October, he had written a quarto of over two hundred and forty pages, wherein, taking up the royalist pamphlet he answers step by step the argu-

## *As the Commonwealth's Defender*

ments and suggestions, in *Eikonoclastes*—“the image-breaker.”

Milton's argument, after an apology for attacking a dead adversary, takes the ground that the publication which he criticises is intended rather to bolster up a living cause than to vindicate the memory of the dead, displays one by one the topics treated, and sets forth strongly the opposing view. His reply has been characterized as lacking dignity, but, considering its purpose, he seems justified in ignoring the sentimentality of the royalist book and opposing reason and common sense to its appeals to mere feeling. Much importance was given at the time to a plagiarized prayer from Sidney's “Arcadia,” that appeared in “*Eikon Basilike*,” but there seems to have been no intention on either hand to deceive the public, the prayer being adapted by some one for the King's use and inserted without acknowledgment because it was supposed by Dr. Gauden to be original. To the literary student, an interesting

passage of the "Eikon" is that in which Milton says: "I shall not instance an abstruse author wherein the King might be less conversant, but one whom we well know was a closet companion of these his solitudes, William Shakespeare," and then goes on to liken some of the King's utterances to those of Richard III. But Pattison sees in this "an unworthy device of rhetoric, as appealing to a superstition in others which the writer himself does not share," namely, the hatred of the Puritan public for the stage and dramatists.

While Milton was thus fighting the wordy battles of the Commonwealth from the rooms that had been assigned to him a short time before in the palace at Whitehall, Oliver Cromwell was absent in Ireland subduing the Royalists with a thoroughness that has won him the detestation of a whole race. Two instances of his severity are oftenest cited. After capturing Drogheda and Wexford, the garrisons of both were slain. Over this action controversy

has raged ever since, but, impartially viewed, the killing of the garrisons seems to be no worse than a score of similar proceedings on both sides during these civil wars. Cromwell's men looked upon the Irish as savages who had murdered thousands of Protestants, and they felt toward the Royalists who incited them to resistance much as the American colonists felt toward the French who brought Indian allies to attack them. It seems only fair to say that Cromwell had not exceeded what was allowed by the usages of war in his day, and that provocation was great.

✓ The bearing of these happenings upon John Milton is direct only because he became an out-and-out adherent of Cromwell and his policy, and therefore our estimate of his character must be to some extent affected by our opinion of the great Parliamentary General. Milton's life at this time was closely bound up with that of the active government. He lived, as has been said, in apartments at Whitehall Palace,

## *In the Days of Milton*

which had been set aside for his use in November, 1649. His eyesight was beginning to fail. He had pains in his eyes that caused drowsiness and giddiness whenever they were at all tired by use. This state had existed for some time, and now he found himself even unable to read by candle-light; and yet there was never a time, according to his own opinion, when he might have put his eyesight to better use.

Just before the end of this year, there reached England another Royalist publication, from the pen of him who was considered the most learned man in Europe, Claude de Saumaise, a scholar and man of letters attached to the University of Leyden. Charles II, living at The Hague, had commissioned this savant to prepare a defence of the King, though it is probably untrue that anything was paid for the service. In the case of such a man, flattery, of which Charles II afterward proved himself a past master, would probably have availed more than any sum the

## *As the Commonwealth's Defender*

impoverished heir to the throne could have raised.

Saumaise went, as was the fashion of the day among scholars, by the Latinized form of his name, Salmasius. Saumaise had before written against Episcopacy, and in this defence of the King he was accused by his friends of being inconsistent. The name of this new attempt to arouse Royalist feeling in England was, "The Royal Defence for King Charles I."

Space does not permit any examination of the arguments. We are interested only in knowing that the task of answering Saumaise was committed to Milton, who gave more than a year to the preparation of his reply, and then brought out his "Defence of the People of England."

During this year one other work of importance was a new edition of *Eikonoclastes*, for two new editions of the answer were all that had been required, while forty-seven of the Royalist pamphlet had appeared.

## *In the Days of Milton*

Meanwhile, the public news was of the most stirring character. King Charles had agreed to the terms proposed by the Scotch representatives, and by the middle of 1650 was in Scotland at the head of an army. Montrose also had raised his forces of Highlanders, and was defeating the Covenanters, but his career this time was short, for, after only a month's campaign he was defeated and captured, and, being taken to Edinburgh, was there hanged on the 21st of May in the place of execution reserved for the lowest felons. The other Royalists fared better for a time and seemed about to prevail. They took up a strong position to the east of Edinburgh upon the crest of a hill, and refused to be drawn into an engagement, though Cromwell used every device to provoke them to it. At length, the English army, worn out by their outdoor life, decided to withdraw toward the coast where they might be nearer to the ships that brought them their provisions, and could, if necessary, fortify themselves

against the stronger Scotch. Leslie, the Scotch commander, seeing them put their sick aboard the ships, believed that they had shipped their artillery and a strong part of their forces. Whereupon he marched in pursuit of them, and succeeded in cooping them up near Dunbar, where it was impossible for them to escape. They could not embark for fear of an attack; they were not strong enough to storm the heights on which lay the Scottish army; they could not march away without exposing themselves to a flank attack from an enemy stronger than themselves.

Things at length looked dark for Cromwell's men, but, urged by the Presbyterian preachers, the Scotch finally decided to attack, marched down from the hills, and made ready for battle. Cromwell guessed their design, began the attack before they were quite ready, and after the fiercest of engagements, hand to hand in the little valley of Brox Burn, scattered the Scotch army in ignominious flight, having suf-

## *In the Days of Milton*

fered the loss of a very few men. This battle was fought on the third of September, a date that often seemed a momentous one to Oliver Cromwell, as his history shows.

After this first defeat of the Scottish army, Cromwell was able to march to Edinburgh, which opened its gates to him. The castle still holding out, he was compelled to besiege it until the end of 1650.

The next year, Charles II having taken the Covenant to satisfy his Scotch followers, and thereby having incurred the reproach of being in a sense a traitor to the memory of both father and mother, took command of another Scotch force and attempted to repeat the same strategy that had preceded Dunbar. Once more Cromwell was compelled, being the invader, to remain at the foot of the Scotch hills, confronted, almost surrounded, by the Scotchmen, unable to attack, and losing strength daily. Again we see Cromwell sending letters to the Parliament at home, explaining

## *As the Commonwealth's Defender*

his dangerous plight, but expressing unbounded faith in his power to extricate himself from it. And this he did.

The Scotch were near Stirling. Cromwell sent his troops across the Frith of Forth at Queens Ferry, where it is narrow, thus placing himself between his enemies and their supplies. Perth, then the seat of government, surrendered, and the situation was Dunbar reversed, for Charles and his army had now to march away northward, and starve, or surrender.

Hoping to revive Royalist feeling in England, Charles boldly invaded the kingdom, taking the westward road while Cromwell followed in the east. The hope of arousing England proved vain. By the time he had reached Worcester, Charles had been able to get together only about sixteen thousand men when Cromwell, commanding nearly twice as many, engaged him.

The battle of Worcester was fiercely contested for a time, but soon Cromwell suc-

## *In the Days of Milton*

ceeded in entering the town, the Royalists were cut to pieces, and King Charles escaped only by a swift flight northward and disguising himself as a peasant. Although Cromwell's soldiers eagerly scoured the country, the King was safely concealed, passing some hours in the historic oak-tree, and at length made his escape.

When Milton had been commissioned to write the "Defence of the People of England" against Salmasius, he had been warned by his physicians that it would probably be at the loss of his eyesight. He believed them, but concluded that the occasion warranted the sacrifice, and by 1652 total blindness had come upon him.

The same year saw the birth of his third daughter, Deborah, and the death soon after of his wife.

## CHAPTER XV.

### FROM CROMWELL'S DOMINION TO THE RESTORATION

**W**HEN the Independents, or rather the party of Cromwell and his officers, were well established in power it was seen again that prosperity may come to a land under any vigorous government. Cromwell and his advisers controlled not England alone, but Scotland and Ireland; and in all three the interests of the great middle class, the farmers, traders, and manufacturers, were looked after better than had been done under the kings.

During the war, England had lost her supremacy at sea and had little or no trade at home; but now that she was ready once more to enter into competition with other lands, the government prepared to regain

## *In the Days of Milton*

all that had been lost. The Dutch Republic had seen in England's inactivity a chance to extend its trade, and England's reawakening brought the two Protestant commonwealths into strife.

War became inevitable. It may be that the ill-feeling between Dutch and English was increased because of the use of the Dutch presses as means to spread royalist pamphlets, for the English would naturally resent this harboring of their enemies by a Protestant republic that should have been in sympathy with them.

After Milton had so effectually answered Salmasius, he was attacked in a Latin pamphlet by an Englishman, Peter du Moulin, son of a Calvinist preacher, and a resident of Oxford and London. This publication was named (to translate the Latin title) "The Cry of the King's Blood to Heaven," and was brought out in Holland by Alexander More ("Morus"), and two years afterward Milton replied to its scurrility in an equally disgraceful attack upon More.

Another publication by Salmasius was answered by Milton's nephews; but there is no profit in enlarging upon these mud-throwing duels. They brought from Milton an account of his own life, and that is all that remains valuable in the three years' controversy.

During the Dutch war and the war of words, Milton remained Latin Secretary, but cut little figure in public affairs. His Latin pamphlets made him known abroad, and he was now and then visited by foreigners, even keeping open table for them at times, the expense being allowed him by the state. But all this was personal and scholarly reputation. In transactions of moment, Milton was but a clerk.

Despite the valor and skill of the Dutch Admiral Tromp, and the vaunting broom he had affixed to the masthead of his vessel, the English fleet under Cromwell's administration had been so well manned and equipped—the great Sir Henry Vane being one of the Naval Commissioners—that in

## *In the Days of Milton*

a warfare of two years, 1652-1654, the Admirals Blake and Monk had soundly thrashed their Dutch rivals, taking seventeen prizes in the two years, winning every great battle, and inflicting upon Holland a loss of £6,000,000. Spain in her eighty years' warfare had not so chastised the Dutch Republic.

The English Navy had been divided in allegiance during the civil war, and a revolted part, under Prince Rupert, had done much damage to the commerce of their native land. But when Blake, who began his service to the state as a Captain of Dragoons, came into command of the commonwealth's navy, he had chased Rupert so persistently that in March, 1652, the royalist fleet was sold to France, in despair of its being of use to the King.

The same tactics now cleared the sea of the Dutch, and in 1654 and 1655, Blake sailed into the Mediterranean, subdued the Barbary pirates, levied contributions on Italy, and won for England the supremacy

of the ocean. In the West Indies, Admirals Penn and Venables were unsuccessful in an attack on Hispaniola or San Domingo, but took and held Jamaica. Spain's commerce was seriously crippled by the victories of the English fleet.

Blake completely changed the system of naval tactics. He believed, like Farragut, that a vigorous attack was the best defence, and he put an end to the old notion that fortresses on land could not be successfully engaged by fleets. He was one of the men who made the Commonwealth of England a dominant world-power.

Milton's blindness became total in 1652 or 1653, and probably caused his retirement from the more ordinary routine of his secretaryship. He was allowed to retain part of his pay as a sort of pension, and was thus able to give more time to his long deferred poetical work. Two sonnets of this year show that the poet's interest was keen in the religious questions of the time. Both are appeals to men in authority to deal

wisely with the church questions then discussed.

The first is to Cromwell, who was then the real ruler of England, though not yet so named. He exhorts Cromwell to win the victories of peace, "no less renowned" than those of war, and to save England from the hirelings "whose gospel is their maw"—the same "blind mouths" against whom he had spoken so bitterly in "Lycidas," written fifteen years earlier. To Vane the second sonnet carries the same message. Sir Henry Vane, whom Americans love to remember as the Governor of the Massachusetts Colony in 1636, was now one of the Council of State, and by no means a blind follower of Cromwell. Wendell Phillips, a man in many respects like Vane himself, called "Roger Williams and Sir Henry Vane the two men deepest in thought and bravest in speech of all who spoke English in their day," and says "Vane's ermine has no stain . . . Milton pales before him in the stainlessness of his record."

These two men, Cromwell and Vane, were the representatives of two parties soon to come to a parting of the ways; but when Milton wrote they were acting in apparent harmony.

April 20, 1653, brought them into direct conflict upon the floor of Parliament, and though in a time so teeming with events we can but glance here and there at a striking scene, we must look upon this session of the English law-makers. They were trying to form a new scheme for a governing Parliament. Cromwell, representing the army, lost patience with the men like Vane, who meant to govern by means of a new representative body that should be formed by themselves and should include only "Godly men faithful to the interests of the Commonwealth," as John Morley declares in his "Oliver Cromwell."

Cromwell, on April 20th, with a guard of soldiers, entered the House of Commons, and when the bill for the new Parliament was about to pass, rose, exclaiming: "This

## *In the Days of Milton*

is the time. I must do it!" Then he spoke, charging them with delays and injustice, and other faults, at last declaring: "It is not fit you should sit here any longer!" Cromwell then called in his "grim musketeers; men of might and men of war," as Carlyle puts it, and after bitter reproaches commands the members to leave: "Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God—go!"

"At their going out, some say the Lord General said to young Sir Harry Vane, that *he* might have prevented this, but that he was a juggler and had not common honesty"; and then Cromwell is said to have exclaimed: "Oh, Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane—the Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!"

So ended the Rump Parliament, leaving in England no organized power but the army; and on this momentous scene Milton has no word—and historians do not yet agree in their verdicts upon it.

Next followed an attempt to rule by

means of a Parliament of "chosen saints," or strict Independents. Cromwell later admitted its failure, calling it "a story of my own weakness and folly," for the "Barebones Parliament" was chosen by him and his officers. "All," says Morley, "were zealous and sincere, but the most zealous were the worst simpletons."

By the end of the year, all power was handed over to Cromwell, and the Protectorate began. The last scene in Parliament was farcical. A few fanatical members remained after the majority had voted themselves out. "What are you doing here?" asked the Commander who was sent to turn them out. "We are seeking the Lord," was the canting answer. "Then," came the soldier's reply, "you should go elsewhere, for to my knowledge the Lord has not been here for twelve years past." Though this may be only a made-up anecdote, it well expresses the attitudes of the fanatics and that of the army who expelled them.

## *In the Days of Milton.*

It was in this year of contending parties that Izaak Walton brought out his "Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation"; a fact that may remind us that some men in England thought of other matters than politics, war and religion, and found time to enjoy the beauties of nature. The author was a retired linen-draper, or, as he was called later, a "sempster," or man milliner, who was able to live upon his savings, and give his time to polishing and adding to his "Angler" until the original thirteen chapters grew to twenty-one. Walton was beloved by his friends while he lived, and by his readers ever since he has been equally cherished. Born fifteen years before Milton, Walton survived the poet nine years, being ninety when he died.

Notable events of the years 1652 to 1655 were the death of Salmasius, the opponent of Milton; of John Selden, considered the most learned man in England, and author of the charming little book of his "Table Talk," one of the minor legacies of

literature; of Admiral Tromp; of Inigo Jones, the architect, whose work makes much of the history of English building during Milton's earlier life; the first appearance of the Unitarian denomination, and the first meetings of the Quakers. Each of these might fill chapters; indeed, one might crowd a chapter with a mere list of the events that could not have been otherwise than of intense moment to Milton. For we have come now to the days of which voluminous records remain, in newspapers, letters, diaries, records, books by the actors in the incidents they describe.

John Selden, at least, must have more than a single line; for he was very great. To quote from the royalist historian, Lord Clarendon:

“Selden was a person whom no character can flatter or transmit any expressions equal to his merit and virtue. He was of so stupendous a learning in all kinds and all languages that a man would have thought he had been entirely conversant among books, and had never spent an hour but in reading and writing; yet his humanity, affability, and

## *In the Days of Milton*

courtesy were such that he would have been thought to have been bred in the best Courts, but that his good nature, charity, and delight in doing good exceeded that breeding."

So spoke an honest royalist of this great Puritan scholar.

Green's history shows us how these days of English supremacy abroad were days of discontent and of beneficent tyranny at home. Cromwell united the kingdoms, re-created the army and navy, established a clergy that was at least efficient and conscientious, if not a united body or a national church; enforced toleration except for the Episcopacy and Catholicism, and made "England the chief sea-power of the world."

In all these matters Milton had little or no share. It has been said by more than one of his biographers that there is nothing to show any personal intimacy between him and the leading men of the Protectorate, though he was known to them. Augustine Birrell says in "Obiter Dicta":

“The busy great men of the day would have been more than astonished, they would have been disgusted, had they been told that posterity would refer to most of them compendiously as having lived in the age of Milton.”

And Birrell says also that Milton was “just a clerk in the service of the Commonwealth, of a scholarly bent, peculiar habit of thought, and somewhat of an odd temper.” A similar remark was made at the time by a Swedish Ambassador to the English who complained of delays in his business, saying, “When he desired to have the articles of a treaty put into Latin, according to the custom, it was about fourteen days they made him stay for that translation, and sent it to one Mr. Milton, a blind man.” He adds that it “seemed strange there should be none but a blind man capable of putting a few articles into Latin.” The only public matters in which the blind poet took part were the continued controversies with royalism that brought

## *In the Days of Milton*

out his "Second Defense of the English People," his "Defense of Himself," and his "Manifesto of the Lord Protector," and similar prose writings. His verse included in 1655 and 1656 nothing longer than five more sonnets.

First of these is that on the massacre in Piedmont, by many thought his grandest sonnet, the well-known lines beginning: "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints!" The sonnet written on his blindness, with its grand conclusion, "They also serve who only stand and wait," seems equally sublime in conception and perfect in form. The remaining three commemorate two of those young friends who "accounted it a privilege to read to him, to act as his amanuenses, or to hear him talk," during his quiet retirement in his home in Petty France. These were Lawrence, son of the President of Cromwell's Council, and Skinner, probably an old pupil, the grandson of Sir Edward Coke, the lawyer. That these young men were his intimates shows that Milton

was not a forbidding recluse, and this the tone of these sonnets confirms.

But the widower's household, a blind man and three small daughters, needed a housewife; and in 1656, November 12, Milton was married for the second time, to Catherine Woodcock, whom his eyes had never beheld. With her he was happy for the brief time she lived; but in a few months more than a year she and an infant daughter born to her died, leaving him again in his lonely house, for his eldest daughter was not yet twelve. The last of his sonnets arose from a dream of the dead wife Catherine, and the ending line is most pathetic:

---

"I waked, she fled; and day brought back my night."

The house in Petty France stood until about thirty years ago, but is now demolished, as Masson notes in the preface to the "Globe" edition of the poems; and of all Milton's homes only one remains, that occupied by him during the plague in Lon-

## *In the Days of Milton*

don, some ten years later than the period we have now reached.

Besides Lawrence and Skinner, Andrew Marvell, the poet, and Lady Ranelagh are mentioned as friends to Milton in his blindness. His nephews did little honor to his training, at least in their earlier youth, for both showed a leaning toward that frivolity and irresponsibility for which reaction from Puritanism may have been to blame. One of them was even publicly accused of being a propagator of immorality on account of certain writings that were anything but moral and serious. The same spirit of revolt against the dominant tone was rife among the people, and caused many prosecutions by the government. A revolution, indeed, was planned, but suppressed before it made much headway. Despite these signs of discontent, Cromwell was governing liberally and well. He patronized men of learning, and established a new university at Durham; he attached to his cause men of talent by recognizing their

## *Cromwell to the Restoration*

ability and achievements—as when he honored Blake, both alive and dead. If he was unscrupulous in practical statesmanship, he was never cowardly nor indirect, and he believed in himself and in the guidance of a higher power. He was not vindictive, and out of the many plotters of his death none was condemned to die, and only one died in prison—Saxby, the author of “Killing No Murder,” a publication justifying assassination of the Protector.

During the same year in which Milton really began the writing in epic form of “Paradise Lost,” Oliver Cromwell was taken ill, and after ten days of “prayers poured out abundantly and incessantly in his behalf,” the Protector died on Friday, September third, a day of moment in his history, for it is the date of the battles of Dunbar and of Worcester.

“Oliver is gone,” Carlyle writes, “and with him England’s Puritanism, laboriously built together by this one man, and made a thing far-shining, miraculous to his own

## *In the Days of Milton.*

Century, and memorable to all the Centuries, soon goes."

✓ And with the death of Cromwell ceases the active life of John Milton, as a man whose counsels were followed, or whose words were of weight with those who directed public affairs. ✓ Though he issued a few more prose pamphlets trying to stem the tide that was setting toward the restoration of the Stuarts, and the union of church and state, there is no evidence that he was regarded. ✓ While Richard Cromwell was being set aside, and several experimental Parliaments were proving their incapacity, Milton wrote his "Civil Power in Ecclesiastic Matters," "The Readiest Means to Remove Hirelings Out of the Church," and his "Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth." But General Monk entered England at the head of an army on the first of January, 1660, saying that he came to "stand to and assert the liberty and authority of Parliament"—but failing to declare just which "Parliament"

he meant. All parties assumed he came in their interest, for indeed Monk had been with nearly all in turn. Anarchy followed, and then three armies met near Marston Moor, one under Lambert, a second under Monk, a third under Fairfax, who regarded the recalling of the monarchy as the only possible means of restoring order.

Lambert's men deserted to Fairfax, and all opposition to Monk's advance was at an end. He marched to London and declared for a "free Parliament," which was equivalent to declaring for King Charles. London had become royalist again, and "went wild with delight." Bells, bonfires, bumpers to the King, rumps of beef roasting in the streets in derision of the Rump Parliament, all testified to the desire for the return of the monarch whose father had been executed for treason. The Commonwealth was ended.

## CHAPTER XVI

THE RESTORATION AND MILTON'S LAST  
YEARS

**O**N the same day that Monk and his army entered England, Sunday, January 1, 1660, Samuel Pepys began his Diary; and henceforth to the end of May, 1669, we have the almost daily journal of a citizen of London picturing minutely the events of London life until within five years of Milton's death. With such an account accessible to every reader, no modern story of the times is needed.

Only so far as Milton is directly concerned, then, need we touch upon the happenings about which Pepys and Evelyn have told us the story in full. For Evelyn, absent from England during the days of warfare, returned February 6, 1652, and

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

records in his diary the events until February 3, 1706, thus filling out Pepys' account until over thirty years after Milton's end. On that Sunday when Monk marched over the border, both of the diarists were present in Exeter Chapel, and heard Peter Gunning, afterwards Bishop of Chichester and Ely, preach a sermon that both noted in their diaries.

Let us then speak only of the events immediately affecting the blind poet, and helping us to know him during the last fourteen years of his life, in Charles II's reign.

By the seventh of May, and after the publisher of Milton's "Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Commonwealth" had been arrested for various "treasonable publications," there was no doubt that Milton would risk his life if he did not conceal himself. He went, therefore, to live in Bartholomew Close, a narrow passage not far from his Jewin Street home, where a friend received him. This Bartholomew Close was afterward the location of several

printing-houses, among which was Palmer's, where Benjamin Franklin was employed as a journeyman-printer sixty-five years after Milton's residence there. Here the poet remained about four months, while King Charles made his solemn entry with twenty thousand soldiers, over flower-strewn streets, with sound of trumpets, pealing of bells, and the acclamations of "myriads of people flocking," as Evelyn tells us; while goods pillaged from Whitehall were being restored, while addresses were presented, banquets were held, and entertainments given to express London's joy and loyalty.

Considering how absolutely at the mercy of the royalists were the fallen leaders of the Roundheads, it is remarkable that so few were victims of revenge. About twenty suffered, ten regicides being executed, and the bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, Ireton, Blake, and Pryde were disgracefully made the objects of their enemies' malice. Milton's writings against

## *The Restoration and Last Years.*

Charles I were burned by the hangman, but he was not molested, except by a short imprisonment. That he suffered no greater evil is thought due to his friends Andrew Marvell and Sir Thomas Clarges, the brother-in-law of General Monk, and possibly to the efforts of Milton's royalist relatives. It is said also that Davenant intervened for Milton in gratitude for a similar service the poet had rendered him nine years earlier, when Davenant was imprisoned. Whether this particular story be true or false, one likes to remember that Shakespeare's godson was Milton's friend, and that each may have owed liberty to the other.

Another less likely tale is that of a sham funeral of Milton devised by his friends to deceive the royalists into believing him dead. But at the end of August the most threatening danger was over, for an Amnesty Act was passed, and though his imprisonment followed his reappearance, he was discharged from custody before the

## *In the Days of Milton*

end of the year, having had the courage to appeal to Parliament for a reduction in the fees charged him while in custody.

“His condition,” wrote Pattison, “was one of well-nigh unmitigated misfortune. His cause lost, his ideals in the dust, his enemies triumphant, his friends on the scaffold or exiled or imprisoned, his name infamous, his principles execrated, his fortunes seriously impaired by the vicissitudes of the times.”

Nor had he happiness in his home to compensate for the troubles abroad; his daughters were unkind to him and unsympathetic. It is said they even sold his books slyly, cheated him in his household expenses, and gave him their services as secretaries most unwillingly, whereby they are sure to be remembered to the end of time as heartless creatures.

After his release Milton lived for a short time in Holburn, near Red Lion Square, “where,” as Mead records, “lay on a hurdle the ghastly bodies of Cromwell, Ire-

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

ton and Bradshaw," in January, 1661. But soon after he took a house in Jewin street, with his unloving daughters, and worked away upon the composition of "Paradise Lost," by the aid of others' eyes and hands. He had taught his daughters no more than enabled them, without understanding the text, to read aloud to him the books in foreign languages that were useful in his work; and some of his biographers find in their lack of education an excuse for their heartlessness. For a year or two this cheerlessness lasted, but about 1662 he was introduced by his physician and friend, Dr. Paget, to Elizabeth Minshull, a relative of the doctor, and a daughter of a gentleman of Cheshire. She was thirty years younger than the poet, but in February, 1663, they were married. She is said to have been a pretty woman with golden hair, fond of music, agreeable and appreciative; certainly she was careful of the comfort of her blind husband, for he speaks gratefully of her regard for his

## *In the Days of Milton.*

well-being and of her as protecting him from imposition; and finally desired to leave her all his property. But there is also a statement, credited to Milton's nephew, that she oppressed his children during the father's lifetime, and cheated them after his death. It is well to remember that these family jars are seldom important and often misunderstood by outsiders.

When Milton married he is said to have lived for a time in the house of Millington, a bookseller, who was seen now and then leading him about the streets of London. The last residence of the poet was, except during a brief time in the country during the London plague, a house in Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields—then an open district, now entirely changed and renamed. Near this home was the celebrated “Grub Street,” since known as Milton Street, a locality once frequented by those who made a living by the manufacture of bows, arrows, and other things used in archery; then the site of bowling-alleys and gam-

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

bling-houses, and about Milton's time of cheap lodgings, where were many obscure authors, who here found tenements within their narrow means, and gave the locality its well-known reputation.

During the few years between the Restoration and Milton's taking his residence in Artillery Walk, there are a few happenings worthy of note as giving a knowledge of the peculiarities of the times. In the streets, a great public improvement was the substitution of glass windows for those of mica, in the hackney coaches; one of the great British institutions was founded, the Royal Society, and is believed by many writers to have been a mighty agency in modifying, by the study of science, the ascendancy which mere authority held over men's minds. Prince Rupert, having already distinguished himself on land and sea, and escaped as if by magic the slightest injury, although he had recklessly courted every danger, began those scientific studies which have brought him fame as a

## *In the Days of Milton.*

winner of victories by intellectual daring. He is known to fame as the improver of mezzotint engraving, as an inventor of gunpowder and a composition called prince's metal, as well as for chemical, physical, and mechanical studies. Most young students have been amused by seeing the explosion of those tiny globules of glass known as "Prince Rupert's drops."

In literature, the same period is notable for the appearance of Butler's "Hudibras," in 1663-4, a long and rambling satire directed against the extravagances of the Puritans. Butler, by the way, was greatly admired by Lowell, though moderns find him anything but easy to read.

The political life of the time turned, of course, upon the domination of the returned Royalists. King Charles, at Breda in Holland, had made certain promises as conditions of his restoration, securing pardon to the great body of his opponents, assuring those who had acquired confiscated estates that their titles should not be dis-

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

turbed, making provision for the payment of arrears due the army, and implying that the consciences of his subjects should not be unnecessarily disturbed.

In 1662 the marriage of Charles to Catharine of Braganza gave England Bombay, her first foothold in India. In Parliament, the general situation was that of a union of interests between Cavaliers and Presbyterians, a union that made it possible to arrive at an agreement as to an established Church, but an alliance that, through fear of the Papists, was unable or unwilling to pass an act of general toleration. From the Church, the secession of many of the clergy was inevitable, and the attempt to suppress the dissenting clergymen gave rise to a new persecution.

It has been said that the Restoration, though a necessity, ended a heroic age, and brought one of brief and dark decay. Charles's government was the most shameless England ever endured. King and courtiers were profligate, and in the reac-

tion from austerity, society followed their lead. Parliament undid much of its best work, passed persecuting laws, weakened England abroad, and by returning to a corrupt method of electing its members, caused a long train of political corruption which existed until that method was reformed, nearly seventy years later.

Yet not all of the good work of the Commonwealth was destroyed. A brief history of the Civil War period, entitled "King and Commonwealth," quotes Burke's saying that "a great deal of the furniture of ancient tyranny was torn to rags," and names, among the benefits remaining, the end of taxation without Parliament's consent, the disuse of torture, the suppression of arbitrary courts, and, above all, the unforgettable proof that the real, national power lay in the people who, having once overthrown the monarchy, might do so again. The same history says truly that the most iniquitous enormity of the Restoration was the execution of Sir Harry

Vane. Those who see in Charles I a martyr owe it to their consciences to compare with the King's death that of Sir Harry Vane, and to read of that trial wherein from love of justice, rather than fear of death, the great Puritan courageously fought day after day, not to save his life, but to preserve his honor from the slightest stain.

It was when news of these events was being brought daily to the blind poet that he composed the earlier part of "Paradise Lost." There is an oft-quoted account of his daily habits at this time. Upon rising, he listened to a reading of the Scriptures, often in Greek or Hebrew; after his breakfast he gave himself to his literary work until noon; an hour of exercise followed upon a sort of swing in his study. After dinner, some time was given to music, for he played upon the organ and other instruments. More literary work followed until six, after which friends were welcome until his supper at eight. After supper and a pipe of tobacco, he retired early.

## *In the Days of Milton.*

It is said that when dictating, Milton "sat leaning backward obliquely in an easy-chair, with his leg flung over the leg of it," and often he would repeat the lines composed at night, before he got up in the morning. Among those who aided him was a young Quaker, Thomas Ellwood, and from Ellwood's own Memoirs we have learned several interesting incidents.

In 1665, in the month of April, began London's great plague. Gardiner says: "The streets were narrow and dirty, and the air was close because the upper stories of the houses overhung the lower ones. No medical aid appeared to avail. . . . The dead were too numerous to be buried in the usual way, and carts went their rounds at night accompanied by men ringing a bell and calling 'Bring out your dead!' The bodies were flung into a huge pit, without coffins." By July 29th, as Pepys records, the deaths were a thousand a week; by August 10th, above three thousand; by the end of August, above six thousand; and

this is believed to be an under-statement. Perhaps the best idea of its prevalence may be obtained by reading Pepys' entry in his Diary for the 14th September, 1665. Defoe's "Journal of the Plague," though fiction, gives a true picture of the awful event. Toward the fall a decrease in the number of deaths began, and by winter the plague was ended.

During the worst of the visitation Milton had decided to leave the city, and a house in the country was secured for him by young Ellwood. To this he removed in April or May, 1665, and stayed for about a year. The house was at Chalfont, St. Giles, about twenty-three miles from London, and still exists in much the same condition as then, having been preserved as a memorial. There is on the title-page of this book a vignette of the little cottage. It is built of brick and timber, and has two entries, four sitting-rooms, and five bedrooms. The windows are diamond-paned, opening outward, and in the house are

## *In the Days of Milton*

pieces of furniture that once belonged to the poet.

By this time Milton had finished his epic, "Paradise Lost," for young Ellwood records that the manuscript was lent to him to be read. Most interesting of his comments upon it is his saying, "Thou hast said much here of Paradise lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise found?" Knowing the Quakers' avoidance of "thou," it seems likely that Ellwood would have said "thee" in both cases, even if it appears otherwise in his own book. This remark is acknowledged by Milton to have given him the idea for "Paradise Regained." There is a letter of Milton's, dated August 15, written to assure an inquirer abroad that he had not perished during the plague, containing an apology for possible errors in the letter, and making the excuse that in dictating the Latin, he has to spell every word for his young amanuensis.

When he returned to London, in the

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

spring of 1666, it was to his residence in Artillery Walk, where he remained until his death. The great event of this year, overshadowing all others, was the fire that destroyed fifteen out of twenty-six wards of the city, and half destroyed eight more, leaving only three wards entirely untouched. The ruins covered a space of four hundred and thirty-six acres. The fire began on Sunday, September 2, 1666. The previous summer having been very dry, there being no organization, or method of fighting the flames, and a strong easterly wind prevailing, the fire spread rapidly, burning down whole streets, and lasting Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. St. Paul's Cathedral was destroyed, but Westminster Abbey was saved. Among the houses burned was Milton's birthplace, in Bread Street.

The inhabitants took refuge in the fields, the government building huts and tents for them. The calamity, however, brought more than one blessing. By removing

## *In the Days of Milton*

“rows of pestilential hovels and narrow, dirty and inconvenient streets,” the health of the city was so greatly improved that the plague never visited it again, though hitherto there had been an epidemic about every five years.

Dr., afterward Sir Christopher, Wren prepared plans for improving the city, which were carried out in part. Many of the most celebrated churches of London were then rebuilt or restored in accordance with his plans, including the magnificent St. Paul’s Cathedral.

Among the public events of this year should be noted two more defeats of the Dutch on the sea by the English under Prince Rupert and General Monk. These victories not only assured England’s commercial supremacy, but were also a gratification to the King, who was angered at Holland because of the depriving of office of his nephew, William of Orange.

Gardiner says: “The sailors of both nations were equally brave and equally at

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

home in a sea fight, but the English ships were better built, and the English guns were better."

During the earlier years of this naval war, it is of interest to Americans to remember the capture of New Amsterdam and its renaming as New York, after the King's brother, the Lord High Admiral.

Despite English victories, the war continued amid diplomatic negotiations that led Charles to believe peace would soon be declared. Consequently, he dismantled his fleet. Whereupon the Dutch fleet sailed up the Medway, took four men-of-war, and blockaded the Thames so the Londoners could get no coal. This caused a great scare in London and led to concessions by the English and a treaty of peace in July, 1667, whereby England exchanged her last trading station in the Spice Islands for the Dutch territory in America, giving her practically the whole coast.

While rebuilding in London was proceeding, "Paradise Lost" was published,

## *In the Days of Milton*

under an agreement securing to Milton five pounds down, five pounds after the sale of the first edition of thirteen hundred copies, and two more similar sums when two more editions of the same size were sold. Possibly the first payment would be equivalent to about fifty dollars now. The first version contained but ten books, two being added in later editions. Despite the unpopularity of blank verse, the poem brought Milton much renown within the next two or three years, and caused many celebrities to visit him in his home.

Masson tells us that the poet was described at this time as a man of "slender figure, of middle stature or a little less, generally dressed in a great cloak or over-coat, and wearing sometimes a small silver-hilted sword. Evidently in feeble health, but still looking younger than he was, with his lightish hair and his fair, rather than aged or pale, complexion, he would sit in his garden at the door of his house, in warm weather, receiving visitors."

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

It will perhaps surprise some readers to learn that Milton attended no church, belonged to none, and held no religious services in his household.

To characterize briefly a striking feature of Milton's epic, one can hardly do better than to quote Professor Masson's words in his Introduction to the poem:

“To say merely that it is a most learned poem—the poem of a mind full of miscellaneous lore wherewith its grand imagination might work—is not enough. Original, as it is, original in its entire conception, in every portion and passage, the poem is yet full of *flakes*, we can express it no otherwise, from all that is greatest in preceding literature, ancient or modern. This is what all the commentators have observed, and what their labors in collecting parallel passages from other poets and prose writers have served more and more to illustrate.”

Few critics exceed Mathew Arnold in stating with exactness the essential merits

## *In the Days of Milton.*

of our great writers. In an address made a few years ago upon the placing of a memorial window to Milton's wife, he declared that Milton had preserved for modern readers the tradition of what is known as the great style. These are his words:

“In our race are thousands of readers, presently there will be millions, who know not a word of Greek or Latin and will never learn those languages. If those hosts of readers are ever to gain any sense of the power and charm of the great poets of antiquity, their way to gain it is not through translations of the ancients, but through the original poetry of Milton, who has the like power and charm because he has the like great style.”

During this year occurred the death of the poets Cowley and Wither and of Jeremy Taylor. The next year died Sir John Denham and Sir William Davenant. In 1671 the publication of “Paradise Regained,” a much weaker sequel to the

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

greater epic, though containing a few exquisite passages, and "Samson Agonistes," a wonderful piece of dramatic composition in the style of the ancient Greek dramas, perhaps equal to anything he ever wrote, and seeming to speak the feelings of Milton himself in the words of the blind hero, proved that since the completion of his great epic Milton had devoted himself to little else than his poetical work. He always had on hand, however, certain manuscripts relating more or less closely to education, and during the last three or four years of his life he worked at his "History of Britain," a treatise on the art of logic, and two upon theology. One of these was lost for many years, not being discovered until 1823, when it was found in a roll of old papers in a public office in London. In 1674, the year of his death, appeared the second edition of "Paradise Lost," then in twelve books, a collection of his "Familiar Letters," and a few minor publications. The "History of Britain" contained what

## *In the Days of Milton*

is considered the best portrait of Milton, the Fairthorne portrait, whose resemblance to the original was proved by its enthusiastic recognition, years afterwards, by one of his daughters.

On the 8th of November, 1674, "without pain, and so quietly that those who waited in his chamber were unconscious of the moment of his departure, John Milton died," and was buried in the Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate.

To sum up justly the grandeur of Milton's latest days, we must come to the American poet and critic, Lowell. His essay upon Milton ends with these words:

"The grand loneliness of Milton in his later years, while it makes him the most impressive figure in our literary history, is reflected also in his maturer poems by a sublime independence of human sympathy, like that with which mountains fascinate and rebuff us. But it is idle to talk of the loneliness of one the habitual companions of whose mind were the Past and the Fu-

## *The Restoration and Last Years*

ture. I always seem to see him leaning, in his blindness, a hand on the shoulder of each, sure that the one will guard the song which the other had inspired."

**THE END.**



# APPENDIX

## CHIEF DATES RELATING TO MILTON'S LIFE AND WORKS

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1603		Accession James I.	
1605		Gunpowder plot.	"Don Quixote."
1607		Jamestown Colony, Virginia.	
1608	Birth of Milton, Dec. 9.	Birth of Clarendon and of Fuller.	
1611			Authorized Version Bible.
1612		Birth of Samuel Butler.	
1613		Birth of Jeremy Taylor.	Drayton's "Polyolbion."
1616		Death of Shakespeare.	
1618		Thirty Years' War begins.	
		Raleigh beheaded.	
		Bacon Lord Chancellor.	
1620	To St. Paul's School.	Landing of Pilgrims.	Bacon's "Novum Organum."
1621		Marriage of Oliver Cromwell.	Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy."
1623		Pascal born.	First Folio, "Shakespeare."
1624		Fall of Lord Bacon.	Translation Psalms 114, 136.
1625	Milton enters Cambridge.	Death James I.	"On death of Fair Infant."
			Elegy to Diodati.
1628		Birth of John Bunyan.	"A Vacation Exercise."
1629		Petition of right.	"Hymn on the Nativity."

# Appendix

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1630		Birth Charles II.	"On the Circumcision." "On the Passion." "Song on a May Morning." "On Shakespeare." "On Time." "At a Solemn Music."
1631		Birth of Dryden.	"Verses on Hobson." "On Marchioness of Winchester." "Sonnet to Nightingale."
1632	Milton leaves Cambridge.	Birth of Samuel Pepys. Birth of John Locke. Galileo's proof of the earth's motion.	"Sonnet on Age 23." Herbert's "Temple."
1633	Milton at Horton, July.	Charles I crowned. Galileo condemned. Death of George Herbert. Laud Archbishop of Canterbury. First Oberammergau Passion Play. Ship money imposed.	(1632-1638.) "L'Allegro." "Il Penseroso." "Arcades." "Histrionemastix," by Prynne. "Comus," (Presented 1634.) Greek translation Psalm 114. Greek version Psalm 114.
1634			Quarles' "Emblems."
1635		Foundation Harvard University.	
1636	Milton made A.M. of Oxford.	Foundation French Academy.	

# Appendix.

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1637	Death of Sara Milton, his mother.	Death of B. Johnson. Church troubles in Edinburgh.	"Comus" printed. "Lycidas," written.
1638	Milton goes abroad. Visits Galileo.	Hampden adjudged to pay. Death of Charles Diodati.	"Lycidas," published. Corneille's "Cid."
1639		Louis XIV born. Compromise with Covenanters at Berwick.	Fuller's "Holy War," 1638-1639. "Epitaph on Diodati." Sonnets, epigrams and canzone.
1640	Milton teaching his nephews in London. Milton goes to Aldersgate House.	Montreal founded. Leslie routs King's troops. Long Parliament begins. Laud and Strafford impeached. Strafford executed.	
1641	Milton in controversy on church questions.	"Grand Remonstrance" presented. Death of Van Dyck.	Smectymnus controversy begins.
1642		Accusing the "Five Members." The King goes to York.	"Reformation" touching Church Discipline" and other prose pamphlets. Fuller's "Holy and Profane State." "Reason of Church Government," published under Milton's name.

# Appendix

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1642		War begins. Annapolis founded. London theatres closed. Battle of Edgehill. Period of "Legend of Montrose," Scott. Death of Galileo. Birth of Newton.	Browne's "Religio Medici."
1643	Milton Marries Mary Powell, who leaves him.	Death of Hampden. "Solemn League and Covenant."	"Apology for Smeectymnuus." Sonnet, "When Assault." "Book of Sports," burned.
1644		Vogue of Witchcraft and Astrology. Battles of Marston Moor and Newbury.	"Areopagistica." Tractate on Education. Divorce tracts. Sonnets, To a Lady, to Margaret Ley.
1645	Milton in Barbican house.  Return of Mary Powell to her husband.	Death of Manso.  Battle of Naseby. Surrender of Bristol. Slaves brought to Salem, Mass., from Africa.	"Familiar Letters of James Howell."
1646	Milton's poems issued.	Charles I surrenders. Leibnitz born.	"Tetrachordon." "Colasterion." Sonnet on Detraction. Sonnet on Forcers. Sonnet to H. Lawes. Browne's "Vulgar Errors."
1647	Milton moves to High Holburn. At work on History of England.	Last royalist stronghold, Harlech Castle, surrenders.	

# Appendix

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1647	Death of Richard Powell and of John Milton, Sr.	Army takes possession of the King, and occupies London. Stuyvesant arrives at New Amsterdam.	Latin Dictionary, System of Divinity. Sonnet on Catherine Thompson.
1648	Birth of Mary Milton.	War renewed.  Pendulum applied to clocks. Battle of Preston. Fronde war in France.  Peace of Westphalia. "Pryde's Purge." Charles I beheaded, Jan. 30.	"Psalms 80-87." Sonnet on Fairfax.  Herrick's "Hesperides."
1649	Lives near Charing Cross; then goes to Whitehall.  Latin Secretary to Council of State.	House of Lords and monarchy abolished. Cromwell in Ireland.  Charles II proclaimed at The Hague, in Scotland and in Ireland. Commonwealth established. Birth of Marlborough.	"Tenures of Kings."  "On Ormonde's Peace." "Eikon Basiliike." "Eikono-clastes."
1650		Death of Descartes. Execution of Montrose. North Carolina settled.	Taylor's "Holy Living" and "Holy Dying."
1651	Loses sight of one eye.	Battle of Dunbar. Dutch take Cape of Good Hope. Charles II crowned.  Battle of Scio, Venetians and Turks.	Baxter's "Saints' Rest."
			"Defensio pro Populo Anglicano."

# Appendix

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1651		Cromwell invades Scotland. Battle of Worcester. Birth of Fenelon. Death of John Ford. Death of Ireton.	Hobbes's <i>Leviathan.</i> "
1652	Birth of Deborah Milton.  Death of Mary Powell Milton. Milton totally blind.  Lives in Petty France, London, until 1660.	Dutch war.  Blake's naval exploits.	Sonnets on Cromwell and Vane.
1653		Death of Inigo Jones. Cromwell expels Parliament. "Barebones" Parliament. Death of Salmasius. Cromwell in control of affairs.  Victories over Dutch navy.	Controversy with "Morus."  Walton's <i>"Compleat Angler."</i>  Psalms 1-8 translated. Molière's earliest plays produced.
1654		Death of John Selden. First meeting of "Quakers." Beginning of Unitarianism. Capture of Island of Jamaica.	"Defensio Secunda."
1655	Milton retires from active work as secretary.		"Pro se defensio." Sonnets on Piedmont, to Skinner, Lawrence, etc., On blindness.
1656	Second marriage, to Catharine Woodcock.	Blake defeats Spanish fleet.	Pascal writes "Provincial Letters." Harrington's <i>"Oceana."</i>

# Appendix

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1657		Death of Blake. Cromwell installed as Protector. Death of William Harvey.	
1658	Death of second wife.	Death of Cromwell. Death of Richard Lovelace.	"Paradise Lost" begun. "Raleigh's Cabinet Council."
1659		Resignation Richard Cromwell and failure of Parliaments.	Sonnet to Second Wife. Pamphlets on Church and State.
1660	Milton in hiding, imprisoned and released.  Moves to house near Red Lion Square.	Monk restores Charles II. "Act of Oblivion." Execution of Regicides. Bunyan imprisoned.	"Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth." "Pepys' Diary" begins.
1661	Moves to Jewin Street.	Death of Thomas Fuller. Argyle executed.	
1662	Trouble with his daughters.	Charles II marries Catharine of Braganza. Execution of Vane. "Act of Uniformity." Dunkirk sold. Royal Society receives its charter.	Fuller's "Worthies."
1663	Marries Elizabeth Minschull.	Impeachment of Clarendon.	Butler's "Hudibras."
1664	Moves to Artillery Walk.	Second Dutch war.	
1665	Milton at Chalfont Cottage.	London plague. "Five-Mile Act." Duke of York defeats Dutch fleet.	Finishes "Paradise Post." (Begun about 1658.)
1666	Milton in London again.	Great Fire of London.	Letter to Peter Heimbach.

# Appendix

DATE	MILTON	OTHER EVENTS	LITERARY WORKS
1666	At Artillery Walk till his death.		
1667		Dutch fleet in the Medway. Deaths of Cowley, Wither and Jeremy Taylor. Rebuilding of London begun.	Dryden's "Annus Mirabilis." "Paradise Lost" published.
1668		Triple Alliance. Death of Denham and Davenant.	
1669		Death of William Prynne.	"History of England" published. Book on Grammar.
1670		"Cabal" government. Treaty of Dover. Building of Temple Bar.	"No Cross, No Crown," by Penn.
1671		Coventry Act.	"Paradise Regained." "Samson Agonistes."
1672		Third Dutch war. Death of Bishop Wilkins.	"Artis Logicæ."
1673		Test Act. Duke of York marries Mary of Modena.	"Poems," second edition. "Of True Religion." "Treatise on Christian Doctrine" written.
1674	Death of Milton, Nov. 8; burial Nov. 12 in St. Giles, Cripplegate.	Peace with Holland.	"Paradise Lost," second edition, in 12 books. Familiar Letters. "Academic Exercises."

# Appendix

## A BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR YOUNG STUDENTS OF MILTON.

**THE POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN MILTON.** Macmillan & Co., 1903. A one-volume edition, with Introductions by David Masson, but without notes. This contains the general facts about all the poems, and virtually a life of the poet.

**ENGLISH POEMS BY JOHN MILTON.** Clarendon Press. Two volumes, with life, introduction, and selected notes by R. C. Browne. This has full explanations of the text, a chronological table, variorum readings, and a glossary. It is complete in itself, and perhaps the best single edition for the young student.

**TEMPLE EDITION.** J. M. Dent & Co. Three volumes, one containing "Paradise Lost," one made up of "Paradise Regained," "Samson Agonistes," and "Shorter Poems," and the third made up of selections from the prose works. The last has an especially valuable essay by Professor Vaughan on the "Areopagitica." An excellent portrait is in each volume.

**THE POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN MILTON.** The Cambridge Edition. Three volumes. Edited by David Masson. The fuller volumes from which the Macmillan Globe edition has been condensed. First edition, 1874; second in 1890. This is considered the standard edition.

**THE PROSE WORKS,** with preface, preliminary remarks, and notes by J. A. St. John. Five volumes, "Bohn's Standard Library."

## Appendix.

### MILTON'S LIFE AND TIMES.

THE LIFE OF JOHN MILTON, narrated in connection with the political, ecclesiastical and literary history of his time, by David Masson. Seven volumes. Macmillan & Co., 1894. This is an almost too exhaustive collection of everything relating to its subjects. The seven large volumes give space for discussing all questions fully. Masson is, on the whole, the best authority upon the facts of Milton's life.

MILTON, by Stepford Brooke. "Classical Writers" series.

MILTON, by Mark Pattison, in the "English Men of Letters." An excellent one-volume life, with special regard to Milton's religious views, but unprejudiced and able.

LIFE OF JOHN MILTON, by Richard Garnett. "Great Writers" series, published by W. Scott, London, 1890. This one-volume biography is devoted specially to the literary life, and brief critical estimates of the works, with illustrative quotations. Like all the volumes of this series, it contains an exhaustive and systematic bibliography prepared by John P. Anderson, of the British Museum.

LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN MILTON, by W. Carlos Martyn. American Tract Society. A good biography, emphasizing the church-questions; old-fashioned, but well written.

MILTON'S ENGLAND, by Lucia Ames Mead. L. C. Page & Co., 1903. A beautifully illustrated account of the localities and surroundings of Milton in his homes. Readable and entertaining. With

## Appendix

maps showing the places most closely associated with the poet, an excellent portrait, and a good index.

**HOMES AND HAUNTS OF BRITISH POETS**, by William Howitt. Routledge. The article on Milton is brief, and needs some corrections by reference to later authorities, but is entertaining.

**OBITER DICTA**, by Augustine Birrell, contains a very brief but able summary of Milton's career.

**THE SPECTATOR**, 1711-1712, contains Joseph Addison's critical remarks on "Paradise Lost," extremely laudatory, but well worth reading.

**JOHNSON'S LIVES OF THE POETS**. The life of Milton is unfair and prejudiced, but should be read after the student has learned the truth from other writers.

**LOWELL. REVIEW OF MASSON'S LIFE OF MILTON**. This essay on Milton should be read for its clear-sighted, fair-minded appreciation, and its exquisite summary of the poet's character.

**MACAULAY'S** Essay on Milton is best read after making independent acquaintance with the views of others, but it has all the charm of Macaulay's style. Read also the "Conversation Between Cowley and Milton," in Macaulay's "Miscellaneous Writings and Speeches."

**LITERARY LANDMARKS OF LONDON**. Laurence Hutton.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MILTON**, by James Graham. Longmans, Green & Co. A book made up by bringing together extracts from Milton's works.

## Appendix

✓ **ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA** contains a brief summary by Masson of his life of Milton.

**SHORT SKETCH OF ENGLISH LITERATURE**, Henry Morley, contains a most excellent view of Milton's life and career, taken up chronologically in scattered passages.

**HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE**, by Taine, in Volume II., in a severely critical tone toward Milton and his works, gives a most unsympathetic view, but one not wholly unjustifiable. It is a good corrective of over-enthusiastic appreciation.

**MILTON'S LATIN POEMS** have been translated into verse by Cowper, though the lines are often omitted from his works.

It has not been thought necessary to cite here the well-known histories of England that give the events from 1608 to 1674. Green, Gardiner, Macaulay, Clarendon, Hallam, Guizot, Carlyle, all give vivid pictures of the Civil War and the Restoration.

Sir Walter Scott's "Legend of Montrose" and "Woodstock" will transport the reader into the midst of the men and events of Milton's manhood. Pepys and Evelyn in their diaries give those minute events for which no history has space, and recreate the social life of the time. Murray's "Handbook of London" is invaluable for reference in regard to the London localities connected with Milton's life there.

## INDEX

"Ad Patrem," 88  
Aldersgate house, 128  
Alfred the Great, 133  
All-Hallows Church, 36, 40  
American affairs, 1620-1624, 58  
    colonies, 23  
amusements, 8  
Amnesty Act, 263  
"An Epitaph," poem, 204  
"Areopagitica," 94, 182  
"Arcades," 94, 97  
Armada, 41  
Army, New Model, 195  
Arnold, Matthew, quoted, 279  
Arthur, King; Milton's epic on, 126  
Artillery Walk house, 266  
Aubrey, quoted, 46  
"Avenge, O Lord," sonnet, 254

Bacon, Francis, chancellor, 45  
    condemned, 55  
banking, 23  
Barbican house, 186  
Baroni, Leonora, 118  
Bartholomew Close, 261  
Basing House sieges, 174, 187  
Beaufort, Lady Margaret, 64  
Birrell, Augustine, quoted, 252  
bishops sent to Tower, 144  
Blake, Admiral, 244, 245  
blindness, Milton's, 240, 245  
"Book of Sports," 177  
Boswell, James, quoted, 165  
Bread Street, 34  
Bread Street house, 37, 38  
Bristol taken, 166  
    retaken, 187  
Browne, R. C., quoted, 129  
Browne, Sir Thomas, 157, 194

# *Index*

Buckingham, Duke of, 55  
Burke, Edmund, quoted, 270  
Butler's "Hudibras," 268

Cambridge, town, 65  
    university, 59, 60, 61, 66  
    Milton's feeling toward, 72, 84  
    course of study, 70  
    life at, 67

Carlyle, Thomas, quoted, 141, 160, 161, 222

Catharine of Braganza, 269

cause of the Civil War, 142

Cavaliers, 1, 3, 6, 11

Chalfont cottage, 273

chaplains, 7

Chappell, William, 71

Charing Cross, 40, 225  
    lodgings, 224

Charles I, 122, 124, 131  
    journey to Spain, 56  
    visits Edinburgh, 140  
    leaves London, 145  
    surrenders, 185, 192  
    given up to Parliament, 196, 198, 202  
    under restraint, 204, 215, 216  
    his trial, 220  
    execution, 221

Charles II proclaimed, 223  
    after Worcester, 240  
    enters London, 262  
    marriage, 269

Chaucer, 30, 35

classical studies, Milton's, 90

Christ College, 62, 63, 64, 68  
    Church, 10, 12, 15

Church desecration, 134, 136

Church differences, 43

Clarendon, quoted, 215, 251

coaching, 64

Colet, Dr., 47

colonies, 23, 208

"Comus," 94, 97, 102

costume, 7, 68, 105, 152

criminal law, 86

Cromwell, Oliver, 26, 158-162, 181, 184, 195, 214, 215, 216

# *Index*

Cromwell, Oliver (*Continued*).

advice as to army, 151  
and Charles I, 202  
suppresses mutiny, 204  
in Ireland, 232  
at Dunbar, 238  
his government, 241  
and Vane, 247, 248  
dissolves Parliament, 248  
death, 257  
praised by Milton, 229  
sonnet to, 246

Cromwell, Richard, 258

Cowper, translates Milton, 89

cups given Milton by Manso, 120

daughters, Milton's, 265

Davenant, Sir William, 263, 280

Davis, Miss, courted by Milton, 184

De Foe, Daniel, on London Plague, 78

De Groot (Grotius), 109, 110, 187

De Quincey, quoted, 129

Derby, Countess of, 94, 95, 100

de Saumaise, 234 (see Salmasius)

desecration of churches, 177

Dickens, Charles, 145

Diodati, Charles, 53, 73, 75, 120, 125, 126, 132

John, 54, 124

divorce, pamphlet on, 164, 172

"Drogheda massacre," 232

Du Bartas, 53

"Dugald Dalgetty," 122, 143

"Duke Humphrey's Walk," 49

du Moulin, Peter, 242

Dunbar battle, 237

Dutch wars, 242, 244, 276, 277

East India Company, 23

Edgehill battle, 149, 161

"Education," Milton on, 128

"Eikon Basilike," 229, 231

"Eikonoclastes," 231

Eliot, John, 197

Ellwood, Thomas, 272

England under Elizabeth, 16, 25, 41, 42

James I, 17, 18

# *Index*

## England Under (*Continued*).

Charles II, 269  
Cromwell, 241, 252, 256  
Epigram on portrait, Milton's, 189  
Episcopacy abolished, 195  
"Epitaphium Damonis," 125  
Essex, Earl of, 175, 180  
Evelyn's diary, 130, 132, 260  
eyesight, Milton's, 36, 234, 240  
Fairfax, Lord, 180, 184, 191, 212, 221  
Falkland, death, 170  
"Familiar Letters," Milton's, 281  
Howell's (see Howell's)  
fanatics, the, 250  
farming, 20, 21  
"Fatal Vespers," 57  
Fire of London, Great, 275  
Fisher, Bishop, 64  
fisheries, 23  
"Five Members," 144  
Florence, 111  
France, 58, 107  
Francis, Sir Philip, 48  
Franklin, Benjamin, 262  
"French Marriage," 75  
friends of Milton, 254, 256  
funeral, sham, of Milton, 263  
Galileo, 112-114, 157, 218  
Gardiner, S. R., quoted, 272, 276  
Garnett, Richard, quoted, 39, 65, 90, 115, 119, 193, 201  
Gauden, Dr., 229, 231  
Gill, Dr., 47, 50, 132  
Geddes, Jenny, 101  
Geneva, Milton visits, 124  
Globe theatre, 177  
Gloucester, siege, 167, 168  
"Grand Remonstrance," 142  
Green, John Richard, quoted, 131, 191, 252  
Grotius, 109, 110, 187  
Grub Street, 266  
Gunpowder Plot, 44  
Guy Fawkes, 44  
Hallam, Henry, quoted, 81  
Hampden, John, 26, 101, 140, 142, 158, 166  
Hampton Court conference, 27

# Index

Hartlib, Samuel, 128  
Haughton, Milton's grandmother, 32  
Herbert of Cherbury, Lord, 217  
Herrick, Robert, 218  
"History of Britain," Milton's, 281  
Hobbes, Thomas, 157  
Hobson, the carrier, 64, 65  
Holburn house, Milton's, 199, 264  
Holsten, Lucas, librarian, 118  
Holton village, 32  
holidays, 8  
Horton village, 87  
houses of the time, 39  
Howell's "Familiar Letters," 39, 104, 108, 132  
"Hudibras," Butler's, 268  
Hull, siege, 168, 173  
"Il Penseroso," 92  
"Independents," 180, 184, 220, 241, 249  
inns, 106  
Irish rebellion, 142  
"Ironsides," 151, 179  
Italy, Milton in, 111, 112  
James I, 15, 17, 26, 27, 43, 74  
Jansen portrait of Milton, 40, 41, 46  
Jeffrey, Sarah, Milton's mother, 34, 36  
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, quoted, 52, 71, 72, 128, 129, 165  
Jonson, Ben, 49, 101  
Joyce, Cornet, 202  
"Junius," 48  
King, Edward, 91, 102  
"L'Allegro," 92  
Landor, Walter Savage, 112, 210  
land values, 19  
Laud, Archbishop, 85, 133, 134, 184  
Lawes, Henry, 96, 190, 194  
Leibnitz, 197  
Lely, Sir Peter, 147  
Ley, Lady Margaret, 178  
life under Stuarts, 209  
Lilly, Astrologer, 199  
Lilly's Grammar, 47  
Lincoln's Inn Fields, 199  
linguist, Milton as, 129

# *Index*

London threatened by royalists, 154  
in war time, 176  
streets, 38  
held by army, 203  
mobs, 133, 143, 144, 166  
Milton's, 206  
Great Fire of, 275  
plague, 272, 273  
love, Milton on, 171  
Lowell, James Russell, 268, 282  
Lownes, Humphrey, 52  
"Lycidas," 91, 99  
Macaulay, quoted, 171, 178  
Macbeth, as subject for Milton, 133  
"Malignants," 2  
Manso, Giovanni, 119, 120, 187  
marriage-portion, Milton's, 198  
Marston Moor battle, 179  
Marini, poet, 120  
masques, 94, 96  
Masson, David, quoted, 67, 125, 186, 278, 279  
Mead, Lucia M., quoted, 39, 82, 199, 264  
metre, Milton on, 194  
mezzotint process, improved by Prince Rupert, 268  
microscope, 59  
military art, 152  
militia, control of, 141, 145  
defends London, 154  
Milton, Anne (sister of John), 36  
Milton, Anne (daughter); born, 193  
Milton, Christopher, 36, 88, 99, 170  
Milton, Deborah; born, 240  
Milton, Henry, 31  
Milton, John,  
as reformer, 30; family, 31; birth, 37; youth, 40;  
at school, 47; household, boyhood, 52; at Cambridge, 67; "The Lady," 69; swordsman, 69;  
punished at Cambridge, 71; Latin poems, 73;  
literary work in college, 76, 80; early poems, 89, 92; habits of work, 92; trip abroad, 99; recalled, 121; conduct abroad, 125; poetical projects, 133; his part in the war, 137; habit of life, 140; subscribes to war funds, 156; courtship, 162; deserted by wife, 164; view of love, 171; Mary Powell, 171; receives Powell family, 193; before

# *Index*

Parliament, 181; poems published, 188; portraits, 40, 41, 46, 189; defence of regicides, 223; as Secretary, 224, 227; his income, 228; at Whitehall palace, 224; Salmasius controversy, 235; under Commonwealth, 243, 252; friends, 254, 256; second marriage, 255; imprisoned, 263; home unhappy, 264; third marriage, 265; under Restoration, 271; appearance, 278; religious customs, 279; death, 282.

Milton, John, Sr., 32, 34, 35, 36, 100, 170, 198.

Milton, Mary; birth, 211

Milton, Richard, 31

Milton, Sarah (mother of John), death, 90

Milton Street, 266

Minshull, Elizabeth, third wife of Milton, 265

mob in London, 133, 143, 144, 166

Monk, George, 258, 259, 276

monopolies, 24, 55

"Montrose, Legend of," 122, 143

Montrose, Marquis of, 185, 190, 191, 236

More, Alexander, 242

Morley, Henry, quoted, 146; discovers Milton poem, 206  
John, quoted, 211, 213, 247

Moseley, Humphrey, publishers, 187

Naples, 119

Naseby battle, 184

nicknames, party, 2, 143

New Amsterdam, 59, 277

Newbury, first battle, 169  
second battle, 180

newspaper, first, 59

newspaper strife, 226

Newton, Sir Isaac, 156

"Ode on Nativity," 80

opening of war, 147, 148

Ormonde, Duke of, 190, 223

pamphlets on church government, 258  
by Milton, 38, 137, 146

"Paradise Lost," 271, 274, 277, 279, 281

"Paradise Regained," 274, 280

Paris, 107, 109

Parliament men, 26  
dissolved, 56

# *Index*

## Parliament (*Continued*).

Short, 130  
Long, 131  
alliance with Scots, 173  
Rump, 248, 259  
Pattison, Mark, quoted, 229, 264  
Paul's Cross, 48  
pendulum in clocks, 218  
Penn, Admiral, 245  
Pepys, Samuel, diary, 48, 260, 272  
persecution, 86  
Petty France house, 254  
Philliphaugh battle, 191  
Phillips boys, 127  
Phillips, Wendell, quoted, 246  
Pilgrims and Puritans, 54  
piracy, 19  
plague, 76, 77, 100, 272, 273  
portrait-painting, 147  
portraits of Milton, 69, 282, 40, 41, 46, 189  
Powell, Mary, 162, 164, 185, 240  
Powells (family), 192, 193  
Powell, Richard, 198  
Powick Bridge skirmish, 149  
Preston battle, 214  
"Pryde's Purge," 216  
psalms, versions of, 51, 210  
"Punch" office, site, 132  
Puritanism, 5, 12, 13  
Puritans, 1, 3, 4, 12, 28  
Pym, John, 26, 134  
  
Queen, Charles I's, sells jewels, 148  
Queen, Charles II's, 269  
Raleigh's expedition, 45  
Reading, captures of, 170  
"Reason of Church Government," 146  
regicides defended by Milton, 223  
regicides, fate of, 262  
"Religio Medici," Browne's, 194  
religious speculations, 195  
Restoration, 258  
rhyme on surrender of King, 196  
Richelieu, death, 158  
roads, 65, 106  
Rogers' "Italy," quoted, 113

# *Index*

Roman Catholicism, 28  
Rome, Milton in, 117, 118, 123  
"Roundheads," 1, 143  
"Royal Defence for Charles I," 235  
royalist campaign, 1643-4, 167  
Royal Society founded, 267  
royal standard recaptured, 150  
Rump Parliament, 248, 259  
Rupert, Prince, 149, 155, 166, 170, 179, 244, 248, 267, 268, 276  
rents, 19  
  
Salmasius, 234, 243, 250  
"Samson Agonistes," 281  
school, Milton at, 47  
school, Milton keeps, 128  
Scotch surrender of King, 196  
Scotch war, 122  
Scriveners' Company, 33, 34  
secession of fleet, 220  
Selden, John, 230, 250, 251  
"Self-denying Ordinance," 184  
Shakespeare, references to, 30, 32, 35, 49, 58, 95, 112, 213, 232, 263  
Sidney, Algernon, 220  
Sidney, Sir Philip, 25  
sign of Milton's shop, 37  
Skippon, General, 184, 221  
slave-trade, 23  
"Smectymnuus," 139, 146  
Social conditions, 21, 22  
sonnets, Milton's, 155, 178, 193, 213, 245, 254, 255  
"Sovereign of the Seas," vessel, 101, 102  
"Spanish Marriage," 29, 56, 57  
Spenser, Edmund, 53, 94  
"Standard in Cheap," the, 39  
Standish, Miles, 25  
Stanton St. John, 32  
St. Bride house, 127  
St. Paul's Cathedral, 48, 49, 276  
St. Paul's School, 46, 47, 50  
Strafford, Earl of, 131, 134, 136  
Strange, Lord, 95  
streets, London, 38  
Sunday observance, 177  
superstitions, 208

# *Index*

"Table Talk," Selden's, 250  
tactics, 153  
Taine, on social state, 208  
tapestry, 22  
Tasman, 158  
Tasso, 120  
Taylor, Jeremy, 158, 280  
taxation, 24, 29, 212  
theatres closed, 147  
theatricals, Milton on, 83  
third of September, 238  
Thirty Years' War, 45  
Tovey, Nathaniel, 72  
trade conditions, 207  
Trade guilds, 33  
traveling, 100, 103, 106, 107  
Treaty of Berwick, 122  
Tromp, Admiral, 243, 251  
Tusser, Thomas, 21  
  
Universities, 63  
  
Van Dyck, 147  
Vane, Sir Henry, 26, 173, 221, 243, 246, 270  
Vaughan, C. E., quoted, 183  
Venables, Admiral, 245  
Venice, 123  
Virginia Company, 23  
"Vulgar errors," Browne, 194  
  
Wages, 19  
Walton's "Compleat Angler," 250  
War-funds, 148  
Warton, 72  
Wentworth, Thomas (see Strafford)  
Westminster Assembly, 195  
Wexford Massacre, 232  
"When City Expected Assault," sonnet, 155  
Williams, Roger, 246  
Winceby fight, 173  
Woodcock, Catherine, 255  
wool-growing, 20  
Worcester battle, 239  
Wottoh, Sir Henry, 102, 123  
Wren, Sir Christopher, 276  
Young, Thomas, 46

“Of Practical Value.”

—*Hartford Courant.*

---

# The Citizen

A STUDY OF THE INDIVIDUAL  
AND THE GOVERNMENT

By Nathaniel Southgate Shaler

Professor of Geology in Harvard University  
and Dean of the Lawrence Scientific School

---

“Profit and pleasure are written on  
every page.”—*Public Opinion.*

“A book which will be widely read  
and discussed.”—*Boston Herald.*

“Practical and stimulating. Inter-  
esting and inspiring.”—*Springfield  
Republican.*

“There could be nothing better for  
intelligent young men than to read  
Professor Shaler’s book.”—*Hartford  
Times.*

“Sound advice crystallized to serve  
as a guide to rising generations of  
voters and to citizens.”—*Indianapolis  
Sentinel.*

---

12mo. Cloth. \$1.40 net. Postage, 10 cts.

---

A. S. BARNES & CO.

"THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE BEST MODERN  
SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTED IN BRIEF AND  
INTERESTING FORM."

---

# Napoleon

A Short Biography

By R. M. Johnston

*Used at Yale University, the University of California,  
and elsewhere*

---

Professor Edward G. Bourne, of Yale University, says: "Mr. Johnston's *Napoleon* fills an unoccupied place in the literature on Napoleon accessible to the English reader, and supplies a distinct need."

"Should be in the hands of teachers as a first-rate text-book and of students as a model of composition."

—*Boston Transcript.*

"Admirable. A clear and comprehensive review of Napoleon's career, of his military achievements, and of his work as a legislator."

—*London Spectator.*

*12mo, cloth, with frontispiece and maps  
\$1.00 net. Postage 10 cents.*

---

A. S. BARNES & CO.

*The FIRST EXPLORER of THE SOUTH*

---

# Narratives of the Career of Hernando De Soto

In the Conquest of Florida (1539-1542)  
as told by a Gentleman of Elvas, by  
Luys Hernandez De Biedma and  
by Rodrigo Ranjel

---

Edited, with an Introduction by  
EDWARD GAYLORD BOURNE,  
Professor of History in Yale University

---

This is the first time that the wonderful story of De Soto's career and the first exploration of the South has been presented in full from the original narratives. In addition to the classic histories of the Gentleman of Elvas and De Biedma, which have not been accessible to general readers in separate form, this volume contains the indispensable narrative of Ranjel, De Soto's secretary, which is now translated for the first time for this volume by Professor Bourne. It is a contemporary day by day record of singular importance. The appearance of the complete original De Soto narratives under Professor Bourne's critical and complete editorship brings within reach some of the most important sources of American history and provides a volume of extraordinary general interest.

---

2 vols. Small 12mo, cloth. Illus. \$2.00 net

---

A. S. BARNES & CO.

"FRIEND, PHILOSOPHER & GUIDE"

---

# Home Thoughts

FIRST AND SECOND SERIES

By "C"

(MRS. JAMES FARLEY COX)

---

"A book which every mother, wife and daughter in the land should read."

*The Lamp.*

"No wiser book, nor one more sorely needed, has appeared in a long time." . . . *Hamilton W. Mabie.*

"No greater tribute can be paid to a book than to say that one is better for reading it. By every test 'Home Thoughts' deserves this tribute."

*N. Y. Evg. Sun.*

"Should find a place among the presents of all brides of our generation." . . . *New York Mail.*

---

2 volumes, 12mo. Cloth, gilt top. Each \$1.20 net.  
The Set in Box, Cloth, \$2.40 net. Half Calf, \$6.00 net

---

A. S. BARNES & CO.











